

A N
E N Q U I R Y
A F T E R
H A P P I N E S S.
In several PARTS,

By the Author of *PRACTICAL
CHRISTIANITY.*

V O L. I.
Of the possibility of Obtaining Happiness.

Κενὸς ἐκείνῃ φιλοσόφῳ λόγῳ, ὅφ' εἰ μὴδὲν ἀνθρώπῳ πάθῃ
δραπέδῃ, ὥσπερ γὰρ ἰατρικῆς ἐκ ὀφελῇ, μὴ τὰς νόσους
ἐκβαλλέσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων, ἔτι καὶ φιλοσοφίας εἰ μὴ τὸ
τῆς ψυχῆς κακὸν ἐκβάλλῃ. Pythag. apud Stob. Sermon. 8c.

*Qui quod tibi parum videtur Eruditus, ea Causa est quod nullam
Eruditionem esse duxit, nisi quæ Beatæ vitæ Disciplinam juva-
ret. Cic. de Finib. Bonor. & Mal.*

The Second Edition, Corrected and Enlarged.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Samuel Smith at the Prince's Arms in St Paul's
Church-Yard, and Edward Pawlett at the Bible in Chance-
ry-Lane, MDCXCII.

1492 a 25

A N
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H A P P I N E S S,
V O L. I.

THE NEW YORK

HAPPINESS

Vol. I

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To my Worthy Friend

Mr. WILLIAM POWELL,

Rector of *Llan-Wennarth*, &c.

My Dear Friend,

W Hom neither thy
Prosperity nor my
Affliction has ever
divided from me, it has ever
been your good Fortune (and
your Mind has ever been better
than your Fortune) from the
first Day of our Friendship to
stand upon the higher Ground,
and to have always been doing
Kindnesses, and never needed
any. I will confess, if you will
Pardon me, that I have some-
times secretly repin'd at this
your good luck, and envied the

The Epistle

Honour and the Pleasure which this Advantage gave you, and can you blame me since it excluded me from a share in one of the most ravishing Delights of Friendship? You know what Attempts I have made to redeem this Inequality, but all in vain till now: Now I flatter my self that I have found a Present to make you, that cannot provoke your Generosity, tho' it were Nicer and more scrupulous than 'tis; I have now at length found a way to End most Happily, the only Difference that ever has been between us in an uninterrupted Friendship of near Seventeen years: You shall always be Fortunate, always able to do Kindnesses, and be in need of none; and I will always strive to vanquish and surmount all
the

Dedictory.

the Disadvantages of my Fortune, and in despite of them find some way to express my Affection, and return your Obligations. And thus if I fall not short of my design, I shall be equal with you; for 'tis no small Service I propose to do you, I will now be your Guide, I will conduct you not as you have done me (tho for that too I must ever thank you) through barren and impoverish'd *Piccardy*, but through all the Ways of *Pleasantness*, and all the Paths of *Peace*, I will give you a Sight not of *France*, but *Canaan*; I will make you a sharer of that Immortality which I aspir'd to, and bring you to that Heaven which is the Sacred Abode of Sacred Friendship, and Sacred Joys. What a Dark Cottage,

The Epistle

what a Rude Heap will the now
Admired *Versailles* then seem to
you! But see whither I have
suffer'd this Passion to transport
me? how easie is it for one that
follows the Conduct of Affecti-
on to be rather *Obliging* than *Dis-*
creet! I had almost forgot how
little you stand in need of these
kind of Helps, being not only a
sufficient Guide to your Self, but
a Prudent and Successful one to
others in the Way to Happiness:
however tho you need no Guide,
I may serve you as the Compa-
nion of your Journey, I may
'wake you in a Morning, I may
oblige you to quicken your pace,
I may Entertain you with Refle-
ctions and Remarks upon the
Country as we pass, and ever
and anon mind you of the Beau-
ty and the Pleasures of that
Coun-.

Dedictory.

Country we Travel to ; these
and such like Assistances the most
Perfect need , these are the Offi-
ces of the truest Friendship , and
these the Papers I send you, may
I hope in some measure perform.
Adieu,

Thy Affectionate

R. L.

T O

1771
The first of the year
was a very cold one
and the snow lay
on the ground for
many days.

1772

The second of the year
was a very warm one
and the snow melted
in many places.
The weather was
very pleasant.

The third of the year
was a very cold one
and the snow lay
on the ground for
many days.
The weather was
very pleasant.

TO THE
READER.

I *It has pleased God that in a few Tears I should finish the more pleasant and delightful part of Life, if Sense were to be the Judge and Standard of Pleasure; being confin'd (I will not say condemned) by well-nigh utter Blindness to Retirement and Solitude. In this State Conversation has lost much of its former air and briskness; Business (wherein I could never pretend to any great Address) gives me now more trouble than formerly; and that too without the usual dispatch or success: Study, (which is the only Employment left me) is clog'd with this Weight and Incumbrance, that all the Assistance I can receive from without, must be convey'd by anothers Senses not my own; which it may easily be believed, are Instruments, or Organs as ill fitted and as awkwardly managed by me, as wooden*

The Preface.

wooden Legs or Hands by the Maim'd.

In this Case, should I affect to procure my self a decent Funeral, and leave an Honourable Remembrance of me behind; should I struggle to rescue my self from that Contempt to which this Condition (wherein I may seem lost to the World, and my self) exposes me; should I ambitiously affect to have my Name march in the train of those All (tho not all equally) great ones, Homer, Appius, Cn. Aufidius, Didymus, Walkup, Pere Jean l' Aveugle, &c. All of them eminent for their service and usefulness, as well as for their affliction of the same kind with mine; Even this might seem almost a Commendable Infirmary, for the last thing a Mind truly great and Philosophical puts off, is the desire of Glory: Hence Tacitus closes his divine Character of Helvidius Priscus thus, Erant quibus appetentior fama videretur, quando etiam sapientibus cupido gloriæ novissima exuitur: But this Treatise oweth neither its Conception nor Birth to this Principle: for besides that I know my own Insufficiency too well, to flatter my self with the hopes of a Romantick Immor-

Tacit. Hist.
l. 4

The Preface.

mortality from any performance of mine in this Ingenious and Learned Age ; I must confess I never had a Soul great enough to be acted by the Heroic Heat which the love of Fame and Honour bath kindled in some.

— Tuta & parvula laudo.

I have ever loved the Security and Contentment of Privacy and Retirement almost to the guilt of Singularity and Affectation.

But the truth is plainly this , the Vigour and Activity of my Mind, the health and strength of my Body (being now in the flower of my Age) continuing unbroken, unbent under this Affliction; I found that if I did not provide some Employment that might Entertain it, it would weary out it self with fruitless Desires of and Vain Attempts after its wonted Objects , . and so that Srength and Vivacity of Nature which should render my state more Comfortable, would make it much more Intolerable.

I confess my Zeal for Publick Good by the Propagation and Endearment of Divine Truths was less fervent in me,
than

The Preface.

than could well become the particular Obligations of my Profession; or the Common ones which every Christian in proportion to his Talents lies under; I was almost induced to believe, that this Chastisement which had removed me from the Service of the Altar, did at the same time discharge me from all Duty owing to the Publick; But my good Friend Mr. Lamb revived the Dying Sparks of a decaying Zeal, and restor'd me to a proper sense of my Duty in this Point; for whether by Design or by Providence governing Chance, I know not, (for he never seem'd to address or design the Discourse particularly to me) he had ever and anon in his mouth this Excellent Principle, That the Life of Man is to be estimated by its usefulness and serviceableness in the World. A sober reflection upon this wrought me up to a Resolution strong enough to condemn all the Difficulties which the loss of my Sight could represent to me in an Enterprize of this Nature. Thus you see on what Principles I became engaged in this Work; I thought it my Duty to set my self some Task which might serve at once to divert my Thoughts from a
me-

The Preface.

melancholy Application on my Misfortune, and entertain my Mind with such a rational Employment as might render me most easie to myself, and most serviceable to the World. Being now abundantly convinced that I am not released from that Duty I owe that Body of which I am still a Member, by being cut off from a great part of the Pleasures and Advantages of it; therefore like one that truly loves his Country, when no way else is left him, he fights for it on his stumps: so will I even in the Remains of a broken body express at least my affection for Man-kind, and breath out my last Gasps in their service.

The fitness and tendency of this Subject to serve these Ends is so apparent, that I will not impertinently detain the Reader by a Justification of this Choice. How fit am I for it, will be best judged by the Performance; yet that this may not suffer any disadvantage from such Prejudices with which the Consideration of my state may easily prepossess Men, I think myself Obligated to obviate them by a word or two.

The Preface.

I have had so much Experience of all the several Pleasures that Prosperity can afford Man in this life, that I am sufficiently capable of setting a true Rate and Value upon them; and of judging their Subserviency to true Happiness: And I am so well acquainted with Trouble and Affliction, that I am sufficiently sensible, as of the weakness of Humane Nature and Misery of this Mortal state; so of the Necessity, and Power of Vertue in Relieving and Supporting Man under both: And after all, my Mind lives now in the Body (like a Soul in a separate state, retired as from the Pleasures, so from the Troubles of the World, and is therefore the more able to pass a free, and more dispassionate Judgment upon both.

It may probably be feared that the same should befall me, which has many Monkish Writers, who being much retired from the World, having much leisure and few Books, did Spin out every Subject into wandring Mazes, and airy Speculations, like Plants which destitute of a well manured and fat Soil, run all into the Exuberancy of Leaves and

The Preface.

and fruitless Sprigs: but the Commerce I still maintain with the World, may in part prevent this Error, and the Nature of the Subject so fruitful of many Necessary Enquiries will of it self lead me on to useful and profitable Thoughts.

There is one thing which may be by some objected against my manner of treating this Subject, the freedom I use in it; being not altogether so common to my Profession; but I hope it will not be found that I have abus'd the Liberty I have taken to the Disparagement of the least Truth of our Religion, or to the least Discouragement of Vertue; and therefore I think it cannot justly reflect any Disadvantage upon my Calling.

Besides I have in a former Treatise wherein I designed the same End, The Happiness of Mankind, treated this Subject in a manner suited to the generality of Readers: but this Discourse I design for such who are not content to submit to Inferences deduced from received Principles, unless they can be fairly convinced of the Reasonableness and Truth

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of the Principles themselves : nor should I think it any Crime were I Master of such Talents , if I did mingle with Necessary Truths all that variety of Thought, all that fineness and briskness of fancy which might render them as delightful as useful, the Example of God himself in the great Work of the Creation would justifie this Liberty, who has Created as well Leaves and Flowers , as Herbs and Fruit, and in the Variety and beauty , in the Colours and Figures of all that he has produced; he appears plainly to have made provision not only to feed the Appetite, but even the fancies of his Creatures.

There is after all, I confess, one thing that stands in need of an Excuse, which is the publishing what should come forth a just Treatise, by small Parts ; to this I may truly say, having laid together all the Materials I saw necessary to compleat this Discourse, I found it grown unavoidably to that Voluminous Bulk, that I took this Method partly out of compliance to the Ease of my Reader, but especially in compliance to my own ; for in my present Circumstances I saw no other

The Preface.

other way to avoid that Confusion which would inevitably have disordered the Contexture of a long Discourse, if I should have charged my Memory with the Contrivance and Connexion of so many, and various Parts at once: and I foresaw that all the strength of my Mind, which should be collected and united in the treating every single Argument would be unprofitably spent in distracted, divided, and imperfect Efforts.

[illegible]

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and small dark spots scattered across its surface. A prominent dark horizontal smudge or stain is visible near the top edge. The overall tone is a light, off-white or cream color.

The INTRODUCTION *or a*
Brief Scheme of the De-
sign of the Whole Work.

TO inform Man what is his true and proper Happiness, and to mark out before him the Right way to it hath been, and ever must be the aim of all Philosophy and all Religion: and yet so numerous have been and are the Disputes on this Subject, and so seemingly insuperable the difficulties which encounter us in every way, that the *Despair* of attaining Happiness at least in this World seems almost as Universal, as the *Desire* of it: and as Nature will never give o're the pursuit of it, so will Man never forbear the Tragical Complaints of his Disappointments, and the raving Exaggerations of Humane Misery. That therefore I may attempt at least to treat this Subject satisfactorily, I will endeavour,

Sect. 1. To shew you, That Happiness is not a mere airy and imaginary

The Introduction.

Notion, but is a real state, and really attainable; and that our Disappointments and Unsuccessfulness must be imputed to our selves, and this shall be the Work of this present Volume.

Sect. 2. To Explain the Nature of Happiness, to Examine wherein it consists, and what is the high-way to it; in which to proceed successfully, I thought the plainest Method I could take would be this, To fix and define the Notion of the most absolute and Compleat Happiness, that so we might discern what it behoved us to aim at, and how near we could approach the Perfection of Happiness. Now the most perfect Idea of Happiness, that the Mind of Man can frame is this, *Happiness is the state of a perfect Being in the unmix'd, uninterrupted, and Eternal Enjoyment of the most perfect Pleasure*; Such I conceive to be the Happiness of God himself: In this Definition there are Three Parts which manifestly appear to be the Ingredients of a Divine Happiness. *First*, Perfection of Being: *Secondly*, Freedom from Trouble: *Thirdly*, Eternal Enjoyment of
of

The Introduction.

of the most perfect Pleasure. It's therefore now Evident that to discover the Nature of Humane Happiness and the way to it, I am obliged to Discourse.

1. *Of the Being of Man, and it's Perfection.*
2. *Of Indolence or freedom from Pain or Trouble.*
3. *Of Fruition or the Enjoyment of Pleasure.*

Each of which shall be the Subject of a distinct Volume; and because there may some Questions arise of a more general Nature; such as, whether every Man's particular Happiness ought to be dearer to him than the Happiness of another; or whatever else can be imagined. *Secondly*, On supposal, that an entire Happiness cannot be attained, what part then of it ought to be prefer'd? and such like. I will therefore,

Sect. 3. Assign a particular Volume for the Discussion of such Questions, and the Establishment of such Inferences, as will naturally result from the former Discourses.



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be

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A N

Enquiry after Happiness.

SECT. I.

*Of the Motives to this Enquiry, and of
the Objections which may be form'd
against it.*

CHAP. I.

The Importance, the Necessity of it.

THE Desire of Happiness is the first, *The Im-
portance of
this En-
quiry.*
most Powerful, and most Univer-
sal Principle of humane Actions; This
moves the Prince and Peasant, the Learn-
ed and the Idiot: Revelation and Rea-

son take this for granted; all Laws, both Divine and Humane, proposing our Happiness as the sole and sufficient Motive to our Obedience.

But all this while, tho' all sorts of Religion and Government do unanimously consent in the Proposal of this one general end; yet so great is the Diversity (I may say Contrariety) in the Methods in which they pursue it, that it seems to imply the Discovery of Happiness, a matter of no less Uncertainty than Importance; there being necessarily as great a Variety in the Opinions of Men about it, as in their Lives and Actions, or in the forms of Religion and Government in the World: since all these seem, according to the different Judgments of Men, so many different Paths which lead to it.

And yet till I have fix'd the Notion of Happiness, and found out what it consists in, 'tis impossible I should live rationally: how shall I steer the Course of my Life aright, when I know not what Port I would make? How shall my Actions tend to any Wise or Noble Purpose, when I have no mark prefix'd 'em? till then I must live *extempore*, and act at
Random,

Random, I must abandon my self to
Wind and Tide, to Time and Chance.

Quo me cunq; rapit tempestas, deferor hospes. Horat,

*Lost by a Storm, for my Retreat I take
Whatever Shore th' unguided Bark can make.*

In a word, till I have fix'd this Notion,
and know what to aim at, Business will
be but a Mechanic Drudging out of Life,
and Study but a vain amusement of my
Mind: whereas when all the Inclinations
of Life and Soul shall have one uniform
bent and tendency, when every desire of
the Soul, and every Action of Life shall
be a step advancing in a direct line to-
wards Happiness, when the vigour and
activity of my Mind shall not be sus-
pended and frustrated by incertainties and
fluctuation, nor deluded and lost in wan-
dring Errors and Deviations, but shall
ever carry me straight forwards towards
my Journey's End: then certainly all my
Labours will thrive and prosper, and my
progress will be great, tho' my Motion
should be but feeble and slow: Thus
Plants whose native vigour mounts
straight upwards, tho' their bulk be less,

yet their height, and beauty is greater than their's whose luxuriant nourishment wastes it self in gouty Knots, and distorted Branches.

Having consider'd this, I resolv'd, that I could not spend my time more manly, and Philosophically, than in an Enquiry, what the Happiness of Man is, and how attainable: Every Advance towards this is an accession to my Life and Being; and all Travail which doth not lead me on towards this End is but so much of Life mispent and lost; what a silliness were it to load my Memory with terms and words, with numerous Instances of Matters of Fact, to marshal up in Order, Lines, and Figures, to talk of unknown Seas and distant Shores, to tumble over each Page in Nature's Systeme? What trifling cunning to skill the gainful Mysteries of Trade? What solemn and laborious foppery to penetrate into all the Subtilties of Government and Arts of Conversation? If after all I have no Receipt for a troubled Mind, no Cure for distempered Passions; if I have no Principle to support my Mind, under a sinking Fortune, or govern it in a rising one; if I have nothing to arm me against my Fears, or to disperse

disperse my Griefs ; Wou'd any one think I had spent my time well, or stock'd my self with useful Knowledge ?

But to find out what would make me Happier, to find out what would free my Mind from the slavery of uneasy Passions, what would make it serene, steady, great and manly in all the Accidents of Life ; This every Man sees at the first blush to be a wise, generous and serviceable Employment of my Reason. This,

*Æque pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æque,
Æque neglectum pueris senibusq; nocebit.*

*This Learning rich and poor alike do need,
And its Neglect do's certain Ruin breed,
To old and young alike.*

This occasion'd St. *Austin's* Ingenious Reflexion on the Polytheism of the *Romans* ; When he considered that they worshipped *Felicitas* (by which they meant that Deity that could confer Happiness upon men) he could not but wonder, why this was not the most Ancient of all their Gods ; or why, when this Deity was found out, they did not presently

discard the other idle multitude of superfluous and unnecessary Gods; since this alone was sufficient to supply all the Necessities, and gratifie all the desires and appetites of Mankind.

The Necessity of this Enquiry for the Redress of Humane Misery.

But tho' Happiness should be a project too great, too ambitious for a poor silly Mortal; yet sure the Redress of those Evils which oppress our State and Nature is such an humble and modest Design as may well become the meanness of Men; and therefore if I could not excuse the Confidence or Presumption of this Enquiry by pleading the innate Desire of Happiness; yet sure I might by urging the multitude of those Evils which infest Humane Life, which 'tis not only irrational but impossible so far to yield & submit to, as not to struggle to free our selves from 'em, or endeavour to lighten their afflicting weight, or study to prevent 'em: This I confess was the first, and none of the least prevalent Arguments that engag'd me; I love my self, and would be, if not Happy, at least not miserable, and I am neither insensible nor fearless; I know the common Portion of Man, and I cannot so far flatter my self as not to apprehend approaching

ing Evils, nor am I naturally so hard and tough as not to shrink and gall under the weight of them, and I suppose most men are of the same Nature with me, and as liable as I am to all the Evils of Time and Chance; and consequently this one Consideration of Humane Misery ought to work very Powerfully in us, and effectually oblige us to this Study.

Aristotle's Definition of Man, that he is a Rational Creature, is flat and heavy in Comparifon to that of *Apuleius* the witty tho' diffolute *Platonic*.

* *Men, the Inhabitants of Earth, are endow'd with Speech, and vaunt of Reason, immortal are their Souls, mortal their Limbs, inconstant and anxious are their Minds, brutish and obnoxious are their Bodies; unlike are they in their Manners, like in their Errors, sturdy is their Confidence, and obstinate their Hope, fruitless their Toil, uncertain their Fortune, swift their Tears, and slow their Wisdom, speedy their Death, and their Life full of Complaints.*

* *Homines Ratione plaudentes, oratione pollentes, immortalibus animis, moribundis membris, levibus & anxiiis mentibus, brutis & obnoxiiis corporibus, dissimilibus moribus, similibus erroribus, pervicaci audaciâ, pertinaci spe, casso labore, fortunâ caducâ, volucris tempore, tardâ sapientiâ, citâ morte, querulâ vita, terras incolunt. Apul. de Deo Socr.*

Thus miserable is our State, and shall we now sit down and only Childishly bewail our selves? Shall we sink under the weight of these Evils, by adding to 'em one heavier than 'em all, *Despair*? Shall we think the thread of Evils is so closely and fatally wove into one Piece with the thread of Life, that no Wisdom, no Industry can prevent 'em? That no Philosophy (how Divine soever) can divide or separate the one from the other? and consequently never think of any other than that one Universal Remedy of *Virgil*, *Patience*.

--- *Fortuna omnis superanda ferendo est.*

*Ah wretched Nature! ah too helpless State!
If nought but suffering can o'rcome our Fate!*

No, no, let others do what they will, I'll never thus abandon my self, I will not tamely and dastardly renounce my hopes of Happiness, I'll study and contend for it whilst I have a being; what-e're Calamities assault me, they shall find me ready arm'd from head to foot, nor shall they ever gain o're me an easy Victory; Death it self, when e're it comes, shall find me struggling to the last for
life,

life, Eternal Life and Happiness: nor can I entertain so unworthy a thought of the most perfect Being, but that he loves this Resolution where e're he meets it, and will be most ready to assist his Creatures in so just and rational an Endeavour.

CHAP. II.

Objections against this Enquiry.

First, Happiness too Divine a State for Man to aspire after.

Secondly, The utmost Happiness of this Life, so trifling and inconsiderable, that it cannot recompence our time and travail.

Thirdly, There is no need of Study or Enquiry after Happiness; Nature and Custom being the best Guides to it.

Fourthly, The great variety there is in the Nature of Men, and consequently in their Happiness, abundantly refutes all attempts of this Nature, and demonstrates it impossible either to frame one Uniform Notion of humane Happiness, or prescribe any constant and general Rules for the attainment of it.

But

But as the *Israelites* when they march'd in Arms to take Possession of the Promised *Land*, were told of Sons of *Anak*, Gigantic Enemies, and Cities walled and fenced up to Heaven; so shall I or any Man who goes about to possess himself of so great a Blessing as Happiness, be discourag'd by worldly and sensual Men, with the toil we are to undergo, with the Difficulties we are to encounter, and generally with representations of the folly and rashness of the Attempt: These must indeed be condemn'd and slighted, but it must be upon Rational grounds, and therefore I must consider their weight and strength before I proceed.

Obj. 1. Various is the working of humane
Happiness
too Divine
a State for
Man to as-
pire after.
 Fancy; they that will pretend to be Accurate and Wise above the vulgar part of Mankind (for such are always apt to despise Speculation and Learning) look upon Happiness as too Divine and Glorious a State for so mean a Creature as Man to affect; it was the not only vain but sinful Ambition of our first Parents to aspire to the likeness of God; *Ye shall be as Gods*; and what can be more truly the Prerogative and peculiar Possession of God than Happiness? Or what

Gen. 3.

what can make us
more * like God?
To affect this there-
fore were the folly
of those Earth-Born
Creatures in the

* *Omnis enim per se Divûm natura ne-
cesse est,
Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fru-
atur,
Privata dolore omni, privata
periculis
Ipsa suis pollens opibus. Lucret.*

Poet, which sacrilegiously invaded Hea-
ven; let us be content with the Portion of
Man, and rest satisfied with those easy and
obvious Pleasures which best suit this im-
perfect Nature and imperfect State.

I know not how well some may please
themselves with this sort of Talk; but
this is plain to me, these Men are con-
tradictory to themselves, and their Philo-
sophy to all true Reason; for notwith-
standing this affected debasing of humane
Nature, the transports of these Voluptu-
aries are as bold and ambitious as those
of the haughtiest *Stoic*, and 'tis no strange
thing to hear an *Epicurean* boast of a
Parity or Equality with his *Jupiter* in the
Point of Happiness or Pleasure. But
to answer the Objection in a word: be
the Nature of Mankind what it will, I
do readily confess, that it were, if not a
sinful, yet a vain Ambition for Man to
affect any other Happiness than what is
suitable to his Nature; for it were to
pursue

purſue what he were not capable of, it were like the folly of *Semele* in the Poet, when ſhe deſir'd that ſhe might be entertain'd by *Jupiter*, not only with the Paſſion of a Lover, but the Glory and Maſteſty of a God, and ſo being fatally ſucceſſful in her wiſh, ſhe periſhed in the Embraces ſhe had ſo proudly begg'd ; This therefore we readily grant, Happineſs is a ſtate of Pleaſure, and Pleaſure is the Reſult of the proportion and agreeableneſs of the Object to the capacity or appetite ; ſo that he that aſpires to a ſtate of Happineſs that infinitely exceeds his Nature, fooliſhly doats on Contradictions, and affects a Happineſs devoid of Pleaſure: Or which is all one, covets a Pleaſure which he cannot enjoy. And thus this *Epicurean* Objection vaniſhes into Air and nothing.

As to that Charge of Sacrilege and impious Boldneſs, which is inſinuated in the Objection againſt our Ambition for Happineſs, when it is remember'd that we propoſe no Happineſs, but what the make and frame of our Nature qualifies and capacitates us for, and conſequently the God of Nature deſigned us ; it will be eaſily granted that God does not only allow

allow of, but direct and delight in Mans Endeavours after Happiness : Those Faculties and Capacities with which he has endow'd him being the fairest Declaration of the Divine Will in this Point.

There are others of that sluggish and brutish Temper, that being unable to raise their Conception above Sense, or discover any Charm in a Rational and Philosophical pleasure, they seem to despise that Happiness the Wise and Religious part of Mankind profess to seek after, and to think all the Pleasure Man can enjoy, so little, that 'tis scarce worth the while to take much Pains for it.

It is true I am but Man, that is, a little Atom in the vast bulk of Matter, and my Life is but a short moment in an endless stream of time : but then I feel a strange kind of Comprehensiveness in my Soul, it stretcheth forth it self to times past and to come, it enjoys things that are not seen, by Faith and Hope, and sometimes things that are not at all, by Memory and Fancy ; and tho' my Life be but a moment, Satisfaction and Pleasure hath its degrees ; and therefore if I can possess it in its height and perfection, I shall live much, tho' not long, I shall

Obj. 2.
*Happiness
here is
satisfying to
re-
quite much
Toil.*

shall enjoy Eternity in a moment, the World in a little Globe. Nor is this mere Fancy and Romance, for when I read St. *Austin* so far inflam'd with the Love of true Philosophy by *Cicero's* Book *ad Hortensium*, that he presently abandons all the luscious Pleasures of his Pagan Conversation for the sake of those which he should afterwards find in a Philosophical life; when I find *Cicero* in, surely, a holy ravishment of Soul, preferring *one Day spent according to the Precepts of Vertue, before a sinful Immortality*; And the *Psal.* 84. *mist* almost in the same words as well as the same passion, *One Day in thy Courts is better than a thousand*; I cannot chuse but think there are irresistible Charms and Beauties in Vertue, and Pleasures in true Philosophy as ravishing as they are pure and sacred, and who then can restrain himself from the glowing desires of, and resolute Endeavours after a share in them? When I have read *Socrates* dying with a generous Charity, and serene Hopes, and with an undisturbed Mind, easily parting with all here below; when I have read of *Simeon* waiting for, and expecting Death, as weary Labourers do the Evening Shades, or Hirelings the
Reward

Reward of their work ; when I read St. *Paul* with humble Impatience expressing his devout desire of Death and Dissolution ; when I have seen some (as some I have seen) setting in Calm, and Majesty, and Triumph, as if they had attended Death, as the old *Romans* once did the barbarous *Gauls* in their Chairs and Robes ; when I have seen Men die, not only with Content, but almost in an Ecstasie, and the Soul breath'd forth not in a Groan, but an Ejaculation ; I must needs say I could not chuse but wish with *Balaam*, *That I might die the Death* Numb. 23. *of the Righteous, and that my latter end might be like his.* These are degrees of Happiness which I should judge it reasonable to purchase at any Rate, whatever there be hereafter ; a smooth, contented, delightful Life, such as would not only bear but invite Reflexions on it, a chearful, lightsome Death, able to make the living in love with it.

But after all, whether this present Life be all my Portion, whether I dye all of me together with my Body, or whether this Life be only the time of our probation and preparation for another, and Death be nothing but the
rough

rough passage from one shore to another, or the Horizon that parts the Hemisphere of Darknes from that of Light, is a question I will not now determine; 'tis sufficient to propose it here as a doubt whereof one side or other must be true. If therefore this Life be in Order to Eternity, it nearly imports me to consider my present Relation to a future state; if it be not, then this life, call it what you please, a Span, a Dream, or a Bubble, yet is it my *All*, and I must make the most of it. But,

Obj. 3.

There is no need of study or enquiry after Happiness; Nature & Custom being the best guides to it.

Are not *Nature* and *Custom* the best Guides to Happiness? What needs there so much poring to find out that which instinct leads us to? We do not see that the most Learned Clerks are always the most Happy Men; let such demonstrate the truth of their Philosophy by their own success: And thus they magnify Nature, not out of any honour they design to do it or the Author of it, but that they may with the greater Security condemn the one, and deprave the other by sluggish Luxury and unbridled Lust.

I am not easily tempted to a Contempt of Nature or of Customs; for by the one I should seem injurious to God, who

is

is the Author of Nature ; and by th'o-
ther I should prove injurious to Mankind
whose concurrent Sense and constant Pra-
ctice creates a Custom. Therefore as to
the former part of the Objection , were
it but once truly determin'd what were
to be understood by *Nature*, this Obje-
ction would vanish : I think our Souls
within us may be justly suppos'd to con-
stitute a part of our Nature as well as
our Bodies ; and therefore I cannot be
content that the Body, much less vicious
habits (commonly call'd indeed a second
Nature) should usurp the Name and
Authority of Nature ; nor consequen-
tly can I be content to allow the mere
sensual Appetites of the Body, much less
the Dictates of Vicious habits for the
Laws of Nature: The Body indeed is
an Essential part of our Nature, but then
it must be remembred 'tis not the Go-
verning part ; and therefore it's Instinct
cannot arrogate to it self the Authority
of a Law. It remains therefore that
tho' the Rational Soul within us be but
a part of our Nature, yet being the bet-
ter part, the *Ruling* part, its Dictates
must have the force of *Laws* ; so that the
Law of Nature will be nothing else but
C the

*Aug. contra
Academi-
cos.*

the Commands of Right Reason : I shall be most ready to grant, that we ought to follow the Conduct of our Nature, taking it in this sense, *Beate vivit qui secundum eam partem animæ vivit quam dominari in homine fas est*, he indeed lives Happily who follows the Conduct of that part to which belongs the undoubted Right of Sovereignty and Dominion in man.

As to the latter part of this Objection ; which sets up Custom, that it may exclude Philosophy : by *Customs* is commonly meant those Principles and Practices which are generally receiv'd and fashionable in the place we live ; I have a just Veneration for whatever is the sense of Mankind, but I think their suffrage is not to be taken by number, but by weight : nor are we to follow the Opinion or Example of the most, but of the best, nor indeed is it possible to understand what is the sense of Mankind in this Point ; for we have Custom against Custom, Nation against Nation, and Religion against Religion.

It ought farther to be consider'd, That Principles taken upon trust have seldom an equal influence upon us, with those
which

which we take up on strict Examination and mature Deliberation : that Men will easily be tempted to desert those for which they have no better Authority than the Vote of a Multitude : Nor can any thing tend more to the Disparagement of any persuasion than this, that 'tis not the Result of our Judgment but our Fortune ; or to the dishonour of any Religion than this, that 'tis Magisterially obtruded by the Authority of Laws and Terror of Force, and will not submit it self to the Trial of sober Philosophy : and so I take it to be a Credit to the Christian Religion , that it did not force assent, but gain it by irresistible Arguments ; that it is so far from shunning the trial of Impartial Philosophy , that it did always invite men to a Sober Examination of its Evidence: and commanded its Disciples, *Be ready to give* 1 Pet. 3: *an answer to every man that asketh you a Reason of the hope that is in you.* 'Tis true indeed, as the Case now stands, Religion may, nay must be recommended, by Authority of Law and Custom, and ingratiated by particular Practice of it ; but afterwards must grow up and be confirm'd by Reason, like a tender Plant that

is first fix'd by the help of another's hands, but afterwards it stands firmest upon its own Roots: and this Method our Saviour himself did sometimes make use of, when either the stupidity of Nature or prejudice of Education rendred those to whom he address'd his Doctrine incapable of entring into a thorow Examination of it; *Then if any man will do my will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.*

Lastly, To trust to others who themselves with like Rashness and Credulity do trust to others in the matter of the highest moment of my life, seems to me inconsistent with common Prudence, with the very Constitution of a rational Nature: for what use can be as much as fancied of Reason, if I slight its service in so important an affair as this?

It is true, Temper, Fortune and Education have *de facto* so great a share in the Happiness or Misery of some kind of men especially; that I must not yet dismiss this Objection till I have taken a little notice of such for whose defence and service it was at first found out; These are,

First, The stupid and brutish part of Mankind,

Mankind, these seem to have met with Happiness whilst they seek it not: their Fancies flat, their Prospect short, and their Desires few and easie, and consequently if their Pleasures be not rais'd, neither are their Troubles deep; Time and Chance happen to 'em, and they bear the one, and wear out the other without any very melancholy or tender Resentments: Stupidity in them outdoes all the habits of Philosophy in others, and want of sense makes them laugh more loudly, live more securely, and die more unconcern'dly than the acutest and thoughtfulest of Men can.

Were the Incapacity of these Men great enough to justify their Contempt of Reason and Religion, I should almost be tempted to call them Happy: but at the same moment I should despise their Happiness; (*) for I cannot call those Happy, whate're their Enjoyments be, whose Souls are too sluggish and drowsie to understand or reflect upon their Happiness: Or if I must call this Happiness, 'tis the Happiness of a Beast, not of a Man: with me to live is somewhat greater than to feed and rest, and to be Happy must be much more than to live. The Extream to these are,

** Non ideo
tamen quis-
quam felici-
cia dixerit,
quibus non
est felicitas
intelle-
ctus.
Senec. de
Vit. Beata*

Secondly, The Gay, the Gaudy, the Modish, the unthinking part of Mankind ; these in their own Opinion, and truly in the Opinion of the World (most men being either Flatterers or Enviars of their good luck) may pretend to Happiness: and if their pretence be well founded, their way to Happiness is a more ready, plain, and compendious one than any that ever was or ever will be discover'd.

But alas, shortness of sight cannot pass with me for Wit, nor an unthinking Confidence for Wisdom ; I have seen most of those Dreams the World can present the gayest Fancy with, and upon the utmost of my trial, I have perhaps found something that could divert my Fancy, nothing that could satisfy a Rational Soul : I will not here examine what is the Employment, what the Pleasure proper to a Rational Being : nor will I now go about to shew, that that Mind can enjoy no sober or lasting Peace, much less Pleasure, which is engag'd in such a Method of life as it cannot give a good account of, or rationally justify to it self; both which Considerations would be plain Refutations of this gay Objection : 'tis enough in this place to say that this sort
of

of life is repugnant to those Principles which Religion reveals, which Reason seems readily to embrace, and which are back't by all the Authority which the unanimous Approbation of the wisest and best part of Mankind can give 'em. It behoves us therefore not to abandon our selves to this kind of life, till we have narrowly discuss'd and try'd theiè Principles; for if they should prove true, then will this sensual, careless life betray us to a miserable Eternity: and tho' they should be false, yet till we are upon Rational Grounds convinc'd that they are so, we have little Reason to commit our Happiness to so great a hazard, where the Odds are very great against us, that we are in the wrong.

It remains notwithstanding all these Objections, that it behoves every man to pursue his Happiness by a Rational Enquiry after it, neither undervaluing Humane Nature or its Happiness, nor giving up himself to the guidance of the brutish and blind part of him, but seriously and thorowly to Examine whatever End be propos'd to him as his Happiness, or whatever Method be propos'd to him as the way to it; but when we

have blown off these not formidable Objections against this Enquiry, but loose and wanton Excuses of the neglect of it, there are others yet that seem by a fairer shew of Reason to deter us from it by the difficulty and unsuccessfulness of the Attempt.

Obj. 4.
*The great
Varietie
there is in
Man; and
consequent-
lie his Hap-
piness ex-
plodes these
Attempts.*

Happiness (say they) is like *Proteus* in the Poet, it puts on so many different Forms and Shapes, that it seems impossible to circumscribe it within general Rules, or to represent it under any one fixt, definite and single Notion or Idea; and it deserves well to be examin'd, what weight or Truth there is in the Vulgar Notion of Happiness, That for a man to be Happy is nothing else but to live according to his Fancy, and it seems no less absurd to invite every man to the same Heaven, or gratifie every humour by the same kind of Happiness, than to entertain all Appetites with one and the same Dish.

But as in that great variety of Complexion, Feature, Shape and Motion, and in that great diversity of Capacities and Endowments which we behold in Men, there is yet one Common Nature wherein they all agree, whereby they
are

are constituted Creatures of the same Species : just such accidental Varieties may the Happiness of man be capable of, and yet the Life and Being, the Soul and Substance of it may be one and the same, and consequently may be comprehended under general Rules. And if this answer were not sufficient, it would not be absurd to say, that Happiness like Beauty may put on various Dresses, and yet be still charming and delightful in each, or that this Bread like that of Heaven (for so the Rabbins tell us of Manna) has that in it which gratifies every Palate ; there are Sovereign and unallay'd Blessings, such as *Life, Perfection, Indolence, &c.* which take with every appetite, and are universally welcom'd to all the Sons of men. Or I may truly say, That Happiness must not only be prepared and fitted for Man, but Man for his Happiness; he must become a Rational Creature e're he can enjoy a Rational Pleasure : 'tis from this want of Preparation that diversity of Opinions concerning Happiness springs, which is so universal a Discouragement. For,

It cannot be deny'd but that the Opinions of Men concerning Happiness have

have been and are extreamly Various : All the different Sects of Philosophy and Religion being so many different Paths which the differing Apprehensions of the Minds of Men have mark'd out to Happiness. I have no undervaluing thoughts of the Abilities of Mankind, or overweening Opinion of my own, I cannot think my self clearer sighted, nor can I promise that I shall be more fortunate or more industrious in my search than others ; this is my Comfort, that my miscarrying in this Attempt is more honorable, than Success in a trifling and impertinent one---

—*Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*

Nor can I think that uncertainty, which this Diversity of Opinions seems to imply, sufficient to deter any wise man's Enquiry ; no Sick man in his Wits will renounce the Desires or Hopes of a Cure, because Physicians differ in their Opinions about the Method of it: the study of Philosophy has never been utterly forsaken, tho' that of one age baffle and o'rethrow that of another, and yet even this again stands rather upon the weakness and obscurity of the former, than its own
Strength

Strength or Evidence. The *Academics* do not seem to have entertain'd so gross an absurdity as some have fancy'd, when they taught that Wisdom consisted in the search of Truth, even at the same time when they believ'd that it could not be fully found out : for where Certainty cannot be had, it is not unreasonable to follow the fairest probabilities. And if this were rationally practis'd in any Study, certainly much more in that of Happiness; since the Necessity of this Study above any other doth more indispensibly oblige us to it ; for all Labour and Learning that promotes not the great End of Happiness is to no purpose, since we are ne'r the better for't ; for to be the better, and to be the happier for't is all one.

But there is no Reason why we should take up with these cold and life-less Answers which will satisfy none, but those who are extreamly well inclin'd : we may now boldly say, the Difficulties that former Ages met with , are of no force now to deter us, we can now free our selves from the distracting Terrours of an invisible Power without banishing him out of that World which himself created , we can now prove a Judgment to
come

James 1.

come without the Assistance of Poetic Dreams ; and the Existence of Souls after Death, without their Præexistence before our Birth : To be short, we have now Revelation for our Rule, and every good Man a Divine Spirit for his guide ; nay, every man (if he be sincere) in such Enquiries as these. *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him.* So that now, we may very rationally conclude, that fatal Ignorance or fatal Error in this Point must be imputed either to a lazy and sottish Contempt of that Knowledge we are most nearly concern'd in, and the means conducing to it, or to an obstinate Resistance of that Conviction which God endeavours to beget in us by his Word and his Spirit, or at least to the want of that just Consideration we ought to allow to reveal'd Truths, or of that necessary preparation which fits us for Divine Assistance, and enables us to understand the Divine Will ; and for this Reason the Dissentions and sharp Contentions of Christians ought to be no prejudice to the Authority or Perspicuity of Revelation, or to the Assertion of the Spirit's Conduct

Conduct and Assistance : for besides that Unity of Faith is an Unity of Fundamentals, not of Fancies, it must be confessed that our Sects and Divisions have their Rise and Propagation from these and such like Causes; nothing being more common than that men's Tempers and complexions and Educations, and Interests and Passions shou'd give a Byass to their Judgments, and a Tincture to their Tenets and Opinions : it is easie to see that the Errors of some are the Dreams of a drouzy Carelessness; of others, the wandrings of a wanton Confidence; of others, the crooked windings of Designing Interest, and so on; for it may with much truth be affirm'd, that all Erroneous Philosophy in matters Necessary and Fundamental, is the Result of some unworthy Lust and Passion; But all these Matters, namely, the use of Revelation and God's Spirit, the Vanity of all Objections form'd against Religion from Dissentions about it, the Difficulties the Heathens were to encounter in their Enquiries after Happiness, &c. shall be more fully treated of in their proper places.

Thus I think I have in this Section,
1st. sufficiently evinced the Importance
and

and Necessity of an Enquiry after Happiness, since 'tis impossible to steer the course of Life aright, without a clear knowledge of that which ought to be the End, the Centre of all our Desires and Endeavours, that is, *Happiness*: without this 'tis not only impossible to be happy, but, what ought seriously to be weighed, impossible not to be miserable. *2dly*. I have cleared this Undertaking from those Objections with which it is generally assaulted. Let us not therefore so far disparage and undervalue humane Nature, or dishonour the Authors of it, as ever once to fancy that Happiness is too great for us, or we too little for it; or that God should disallow as a Sacrilegious Ambition the most rational Attempts of a rational Creature, I mean those of becoming Happy: since we seek no other Happiness than what the Make and Frame of Nature, and consequently the God of Nature, appears plainly to capacitate us for, and design us to; the greatness of which nothing can so well express as the transports and raptures of happy Men.

But let us not think this Happiness so easie a purchase, that it will run into the lap of the sluggish, or prostitute it self
to

to the embraces of senseless brutish Lusts. No, no, nothing but industrious Reason, pure and vigorous Philosophy, can e'er attain it : The Sluggard or the Wanton, the Fool and Vain, may have some fits of ease and mirth ; only the Rational, only the Philosopher can possess true and lasting Happiness : Nor let the endless Quarrels, the numerous Contentions of vain and proud Pretenders, discourage us from following the conduct of Reason and Revelation : these are the contentions of Lust, not Philosophy. Truth and Happiness (as some have lately fanfy'd of Love) inhabit a Palace, into which none can enter, but humble, sincere, and constant Lovers.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

*Of the attainableness or possibility of
Happiness in this Life.*

C H A P. I.

*The Notion of Happiness stated ; Granted
imperfect ; Compared to that of another
Life ; yet in it self considerable and de-
sirable.*

HAVING removed such Discouragements as were less considerable, I come now to examine that which attacks my Design with the rudest violence, and undermines the very foundation of it ; I mean, the *Impossibility* of obtaining Happiness in this World. 'Tis true, if our endeavours after Happiness here, could succeed no further than to secure it to us hereafter, none could deny them reasonable upon this sole account : yet because this perswasion would blunt the force of one of the most powerful Motives to Religion, which is, *That its ways are ways*
of

of Pleasantness, and all its Paths Peace, and consequently very much abate our Vigilance and Industry in pursuit of it; I judge it indispensibly necessary to enter into a full discussion of this Point; in managing which, I will, *First*, Assert the possibility of obtaining Happiness, by plain, and as I think, unanswerable, Arguments; and then, *Secondly*, I will endeavour to give full Satisfaction to all Objections to the contrary: but, before I do either of these, as well for Order, and Instruction-sake, as to obviate Mistakes, I think 'tis fit I should explain my notion of the Happiness I propose, I must therefore acquaint my Reader, that I do not promise him a Heaven upon Earth, that I do not promise him the Happiness of Angels, but of Men; and that I do not understand Happiness in this Proposition of that which is every way perfect and absolute, to which fancy it self can add nothing, but of that which is like our Nature incomplete and imperfect, speaking comparatively, and yet truly great and excellent in it self too. *Seneca* doth somewhere describe his Happy man much after this manner, "He is one who despises

The Happiness of this life granted imperfect.

D

"all

“ all those things which are subject to
“ Change, who accounts nothing good
“ or bad but Vertue or Vice, who is
“ not puffed up by prosperous Events,
“ nor cast down by adverse ones, one
“ whose great Pleasure is to despise Plea-
“ sure, one above either Desire or Fear,
“ content with the Riches which are
“ the true and proper possession of Ver-
“ tue, and coveting nothing more; such
“ a one, he thinks, cannot choose but be
“ Happy. And I think so too, and I
fear a great deal Happier than any man
on Earth can ever be; this is a gay
Dream, but well-suiting that Philosophy
which requires the Tranquillity and
Steadiness or Constancy of God to be
joyned with the frailty of Man; a Com-
position of things infinitely more incom-
patible than that of an Immortal Soul
and Mortal Body can be fancy'd to be:
for my part, I am content to call a
Building beautiful, tho' there be some-
thing in it which doth not answer the
Test of the strictest Art, or at least of
the most accurate fancy; I am content
to call it Day, tho' sitting Clouds and
Showers do now and then a little ob-
scure the Light: so can I not choose
but

but call him Righteous who is sincere tho not perfect, whose life is generally speaking bright and exemplary, tho not utterly void of spots and blemishes, whose Motion is a progress towards Vertue, tho it be sometimes retarded, nay sometimes interrupted: and so am I content to think him a Happy man, not who is utterly exempt from all disturbances in Mind or Body, not who lives in constant Ecstasie; but him whose Pleasures are more and greater than his Troubles, whose Hopes are more and greater than his Fears: one whose Enjoyments, tho they do not transport, do satisfy him; one whose Serenity and Calm of mind tho it may suffer Interruptions, suffers but few and slight ones: I will intreat the Reader to admit of this Notion of Happiness here, till we gradually advance to a clear and full discovery of it. Now as we are not to lay aside any advice of being Vertuous, because we cannot arrive at the height and constancy of holy Angels; so neither are we to cast off all thoughts of Happiness, because we cannot equal theirs: for if we are Happy in such a degree as the Imperfection of our Na-

*The possibility
 &c.
 proved.*

ture and this inferiour state will permit ; if we can free our selves from those Miseries which do involve the foolish and vicious part of Mankind, if we can possess our selves of those humble and modest joys that Humane Nature is here capable of , it will be worth all the time and travail we can spend upon the Design: and that we may advance thus far, the following Considerations will, I think, render it more than probable.

CHAP. II.

The Possibility of attaining Happiness Asserted.

1. *Some Happier than others, and this owing to their Vertue.* 2. *Good and Evil in the World. Obj. Evils more than Goods answered, by Asserting the contrary. From the Suffrage of the Good. The make of the World. The Nature of Man. Scripture. The Confession of Atheists and Epicureans. Obj.* 2. *Evil more Efficacious than Good, Answered. What Impressions Evils ought to make on Man, Examined.*
 Na-

Natural Evils slight, unless sharpened by our selves. Moral Evils avoidable. What Impressions Evils actually have, Examined. Man proved naturally furnished with Inclinations and Arts that magnifie Good, and lessen Evil. Obj. 3. Good and Evil not dependant of Man, Answered by Considering the Nature of Wisdom and Folly. A Recapitulation of the Arguments of this Chapter.

First, It cannot be deny'd but that some Men are more Happy, or at least less Miserable than others; who will deny *Titus* to have been infinitely more Happy than *Nero*? *Titus* whose Government of the *Roman* People was not more mild and gentle than the impartial Reflections of his Conscience upon himself and Actions, if we credit *Suetonius* in his Relation of his Death? *Nero* that guilty Wretch, whose Conscience was no less a Plague to him than he to *Rome*? Who prefers not the Character of *Mitio* in the Comedian before that of *Demea*? *Mitio* whose smooth and kind as well as prudent Behaviour rendred him easie and amiable to his Family and Relations, and made the For-

*Because
some are
happier
than others*

*Sueton. in
vita Titi.*

Terent.

tune of his whole life flow calmly and gently to the end: *Demea* whose four, suspicious and severe Behaviour did exasperate and ruffle the minds of all that related to him, and did disturb and muddy that stream of his affairs, which would have otherwise run smooth and clear: who will compare the pleasant Retirements, the modest Contentments, the regular and virtuous Enjoyments of *Atticus*, with the turbulent popularity of *Gracchus*, or the fatal Luxuries of *Catoline*, or the proud Cruelties of *Sylla* and *Marius*? what then? Shall we attribute no share of Happiness or Misery to the Vertues or the Vices of the one or other? or no part of their Vertues or Vices to themselves, but to (I know not what) fatal and irresistible Causes? If we assert the former, with frontless Confidence we contradict unquestionable Matters of Fact; if the latter, we rob the Vertuous of that Merit which rendred 'em beloved in their Lives, and ever since has preserved their Memories Sacred and Honourable, and we acquit those from all blame or guilt which the Laws of their own Country and the common sense of Mankind have ever con-

condemned and detested. What gross and monstrous absurdities are these? shall we now after the Improvement of so many Ages, (for we pretend to grow more Wise and Learned daily) dispute whether Vice or Vertue be the better guide of Humane Actions, or the more serviceable to Humane Life? Shall Sloth and Luxury be thought to conduce as much to the prosperity and decency of our Lives, as Industry and frugal Temperance? Shall Ambition, Pride, and Choler be now judg'd as instrumental to promote or preserve the Peace and Repose of our Minds and States, as Modesty, Meekness, and Charity? or if this be too daring a defiance to Sense and Experience, shall we contend that the slothful and luxurious, the unjust, and cruel are as blameless and innocent; nay, if we will extend Principles to their just Consequence, as commendable and worthy of Praise as the Industrious and Temperate, the Meek and Gentle, the Just and Charitable? for this must inevitably follow, if neither Men's Vertues nor Vices be in any degree to be ascribed to themselves: wretched and desperate is that shift that

equals the just and unjust, the industrious and the sluggard, the great Mind that stands upright under and outbraves Misfortune, and the degenerate one which effeminately shrinks and breaks under it! wretched the Shift that equals the Tyrant and most gracious Prince, the loyallest Subject and the Traitor, the faithful Friend and the perfidious Flatterer, and all this we must be driven to, or else, as we cannot deny, that some are Happier than others, so we must not deny that the Happiness of the one, or Misery of the other, is owing in some measure at least to their Vertues and Vices, and these to themselves. And if this be true, 'tis evident, we may be Happy if we will; and tho we may not equal the most Happy (for I will not exclude Temper, Education, Fortune from all share in Mens Misery or Happiness) yet since every degree of Happiness is truly valuable, let us with all our might endeavour to be as Happy as we can.

Horat.

*Nec quia desperes invicti membra Glyconis,
Nodosa Corpus noli prohibere Cheiragra,
Est quiddam prodire tenus -----*

The

The mighty Glyco's strength you can't
attain,
Don't therefore scorn to free your Limbs
from Pain
Of knotty Gout? Ease tho not Strength
to gain,
Is no small Happiness----

But to pursue our proof,

2 It is a great absurdity to confound
or equal Vertue and Vice, but 'tis not
the greatest they commit who deny the
possibility of attaining Happiness; for
he that banishes Happiness out of the
World, does at the same time banish
Good and Evil out of it too: for Good
being nothing else but the subserviency
of some things to our true Interest and
Pleasure, and Evil the tendency of
others to our trouble and injury; it
must needs follow if there be Good and
Evil in the World, that he who has a
greater share of Good than Evil is a
Happy man; and he that denieth Good
and Evil, may with as plausible a Con-
fidence deny all Humane Passions, and
assert that there is neither Love nor Ha-
tred, neither Joy nor Grief, nor Hope,

*Because
there is
Good and
Evil in the
World.*

nor

nor Fear, nor Pity, nor Envy; for Good or Evil are the Objects or Causes of all these. I may then, I think, take it for granted, that no man will take the Confidence to say, that there is no such thing as Good or Evil in the World; and consequently all men must be oblig'd to acknowledge such a state as Happiness in the World too, unless they will affirm one of these three things, either First, That Evil grows up every where in thick Crops; Good, thin, scatter'd, and rarely to be found, especially grown up to its maturity; That consequently there are none whose share of Evil doth not infinitely outweigh that of Good Or Secondly, That Evil hath so much of Venom and Malignity in it, that a little Evil contributes more to our Misery than a great deal of Good can to our Happiness; so ripe and full grown is Evil, so lank, undergrown, and every way imperfect is Good in this World. Or Thirdly, That we ourselves can contribute nothing to that Good or Evil which is our Portion, 'tis the Product not of Reason or Industry, but of Time and Chance, or of some other Principle which is not in our Power.

Power. All these deserve to be weigh'd, not only because the Examination of them will tend to cheer and encourage the Minds of Men, and to render the great Creator and Governour of the World more dear and venerable to us; but also, because it will be of some use and service to the whole Inquiry.

First, Therefore let us examine what Truth there is in that fancy which supposes the weight and number of Evils in the World infinitely to exceed that of Good things. I know there are a sort of four and murmuring, of proud and ambitious Wretches, who deal with their God as with their Prince or Patrons; and estimate Favours and Benefits, not according to their Merit, but Expectation; greedy and haughty Expectation which even Prodigal Bounty cannot satisfy: 'tis the strange temper of some men that they wither and grow lean with Discontent and Envy; even whilst their studied Meals distract the wanton Appetite, and their very Attendants are sleek and full, and fat with the remains of their Feasts; and the meanest of their Relations thrive into Pride and Insolence by the mere sprink-

*1. Evils not
more than
Goods in
the World.
From the
suffrage of
the Good.*

sprinklings of their plenty : I know 'tis natural to some to Blaspheme God and the King, to quarrel with and reproach Providence, and the Government ; while loaded with good things, they stretch themselves on filken Couches ; under Roofs of Cedar, and loll at ease in their gilt Coaches ; and yet at the same time the honest Country-man, who with security tho much drudgery Ploughs , and Sows, and Reaps a few Acres, Eats his plain meals with cheerfulness, sleeps without disturbance, blesses God, and magnifies the goodness of his Prince: The Contentment of the One is an evident proof of Gods Bounty and Goodness ; whose provision doth far exceed the Necessities of his Creatures : The discontent of th'other can be no disparagement to it since he has dealt extremely liberally with 'em, tho they enjoy not what they possess : we are not therefore to judge of the World by the Clamours and Invectives of such as are always mutinous and dissatisfy'd, but by the suffrages of those humble, modest, and grateful Souls who know how to value the Favours of Heaven and themselves as they ought to do ; who do
not

not marr and corrupt every Blessing by peevishness, or envy, or pride, or wantonness, but can weigh their enjoyments; their hopes and their merits in just and equal Balances, and discerning how much the one does exceed the other, chearfully adore and praise the World's Author and Governour. If this Controversie were to be determin'd by such, we should find these even under uneasie and Tyrannical Governments, and in the more barren and niggardly Countries, confuting this Objection by their chearfulness and contentment: what would they have done, if Providence had planted 'em there where a fertile Soil and thriving Trade had unladed the Wealth and Plenty of the World into their Arms, and a mild and gentle Government had secur'd and guarded their Enjoyments?

But let us decide the Controversie not by Votes but Reasons, let us consider the State and Nature of the World; is there one in a Thousand who is left utterly unfurnish'd of all means of wise and wholesome Instruction, which is the Good of the Soul of Man? or is there one in a Thousand maim'd and defective

*From the
make of the
World.*

ctive in the Powers and Faculties of the Soul, or Senses and Members of the Body? Is there One in a Thousand born under so unlucky and envious Planets, that he cannot by any Industry or Vertue provide himself a comfortable Subsistence? View and survey the World; examine and consider Man, and then tell me whether there be any room for those reproaches and spiteful reflections, by which some men have so outrag'd Nature and Providence? *Philo Judæus* tells us a Rabbinical Story to this purpose, That when God had created the World, he demanded of a Prophet, Whether he saw any thing wanting to consummate and compleat the glorious Work? Who told him, *Nothing*, but an intelligent Being, to praise the wise and gracious Architect. God approving the Advice, created Man. The *Hebrew* Philosophers (it seems) thought the World exactly perfect, such a Work as might bespeak God the Author of it: and no wonder, for they were inspired by *Moses*, who brings in God reflecting upon his own Creation, thus: *And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* How unlike is all this to the *Epicurean* Philosophy, whose

*Philo Jud.
de Planta-
tione Noe.*

whose great Patron *Lucretius* endeavours to infer from the ill contrivance, the manifold defects, the innumerable evils of the World, that God could not be the Creator of it! That ever that Work by which God design'd to exalt his Glory, should be drawn into an occasion of dishonouring and reproaching him! That ever that Work which deserv'd the Praises of Men and Angels, should at last stand in need of Apologies and Defences! If we look up to the Heavens, such is the Beauty of those Bodies, so uniform and regular their motions, so exactly are they dispos'd both for Ornament and Service, that the speculation naturally exalts the Mind, and insensibly raises it above the Body: nay, it has tempted some to think every Star moved and acted by some Understanding Spirit. If we look upon the Earth, so wonderful is the Variety, so inconceivable the Wealth and Plenty of it, that it is not only sufficient for the Needs and Desires of the Sober and Temperate, but even for the Luxury and Wantonness of the Fanciful and Intemperate: every place almost is a Paradise, there is no Country almost which cannot afford us *Tempe*, or *Campania*, *opus gaudentis*

dentis naturæ, a Work which Nature seems to have created when in the gayest and the kindest humour. If there were room for fancy in sacred things, one would almost think that *Moses* out of Ignorance of other Countries, or love of his own, had confin'd *Eden* within those narrow bounds he sets it; and that it had only been lost there, because a fuller Discovery of the World had now found it almost every where: This is the World we complain of.

*From the
nature of
Man.*

Pfal. 139.

Pfal. 8.

Let us now consider Man, and we shall find with the Psalmist, *that he is wonderfully made; he is but a little lower than the Angels; he is crown'd with Glory and Honour, and all the Creatures are put under his feet; all the Fowls of the air, and all the beasts of the field.* How infinitely wise as well as kind does God appear in his Contrivance? So modest are his Appetites, that a small portion of Nature's good is a full Meal or Feast; and yet so various, that there is nothing in all the Provision, in all the Joys and Luxuries of Nature, which he is not capable of tasting and enjoying. If we regard the Mind of Man, 'tis capable of a most surprizing satisfaction in the contemplation

tion of the hidden Powers, the secret Laws and Operations of Nature; nay, it rises higher, it passes the bounds of Mechanick Nature, it entertains it self with Moral Perfections, and the spiritual Excellencies of an invisible World, and gazes on those Charms and Glories which are not subject to the bodily eye: *Vultus nimis lubricos aspici*: Such is the nature of the Soul, that when it pleases it can retire within it self, withdraw from Sense, and be secure and happy in its own strength and wealth, *Ipsa suis pollens opibus*; and when it pleases it can walk forth like *Dinah* to see the Daughters of the Land, those Beauties that Sense presents it with; and that too (if guarded by awful Virtue) without the danger of a Rape. To say all of it in a word, 'tis capable of a share in all the Good, and not necessarily subject to any of the Evil of this World.

-----*Fatis avolsa Voluntas.*

There are no Fates that can controul
The sovereign freedom of the Soul.

If this be a true Account of Man, and
the state of the World which he inhabits,
if the one be fill'd with all things neces-
E sary

fary and delightful, and the other be endow'd with all those Capacities and Appetites that fit him to enjoy 'em; nay, if his Soul can raise it self above the Pleasures, and exempt it self from the Changes and Revolutions of it: nothing is more manifest, than that the Evil in life cannot be greater than the good, unless it be owing to our selves.

From Scripture.

And to leave this matter beyond dispute, no man pretending to receive Revelation, should admit of the contrary Opinion; for no Texts of Divine Writ are more plain than those which proclaim to us God's love of Mankind; *That he doth not afflict or grieve willingly the Children of Men*; that the Book of Creation and Providence is writ all over with the legible Characters of Love; so legible, that it renders the Idolatry and Wickedness of the Gentiles inexcusable; and finally, that *he gives us richly all things to enjoy*; where the Apostle excellently expresses at once the Bounty and Design of God: His Bounty, in that he gives us all things *richly*; His Design, not to enkindle, and then delude our Desires, like the Tree of Life or Knowledge, made only to be forbidden us, but on purpose to be

1 Tim. 6.

be enjoy'd by us. So then the Christian cannot believe the Evils to outweigh the Goods of Life, without contradicting Revelation; nor the Atheist or Epicurean, as shall appear from what follows, without contradicting himself.

ON If Nature has contriv'd the World so ill, if it has scatter'd good things with such a sparing and envious hand, whence are all those Transports and Ecstasies we meet with amongst these Men? what is the Ground? what is the Matter of them? whence so rich a Crop of worldly sensual Pleasures? whence so much dotage on, and fondness for the World we so complain of? whence are the Charms and irresistible Temptations which the generality of Mankind is vanquish'd by? whence is it that men are so willing to set up their Rest on this side Canaan? whence that dread and aversion of Death, as the most formidable Evil?

*From the
Confession of
Atheists and
Epicureans.*

Again, If Nature has been such a Stepmother to Man, if it has frowardly and peevishly design'd him little else but Mischief: whence that sagacity and penetration of Mind, searching with delight into all the retirements of Nature? whence that comprehensive and almost immense

capacity of Pleasure : whence that Strength and Greatness of Soul, enabling not only to confront, but to despise Evils, and to be happy in despite of 'em : These are Advantages so incomparably Great and Good, that no Evils can be ballanced against 'em : and 'tis evident that no Writings, no not of the Stoicks themselves, were ever more stuffed with boasting and daring accounts of the Nature of Man, than those of the Epicureans. And thus, from all put together, whether we consult the Nature and State of the World and Man, the Testimony of Revelation or Reason, the Suffrages of the good-humour'd and grateful part of Mankind, or the Confessions of the Voluptuous and Atheistical, 'tis evident that Good does out-weigh Evil in the Design of God or Nature. But have I not my self, in the beginning of this Treatise, acknowledg'd the weight and number of *Evils* great ? Yes, but *Evils* not of God's Creation, but our own : for the truth of the whole is, *ταράσσει τὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἢ τὰ πρῶτα, ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ πρῶτοι τῶν ὀργισμάτων.* Not things themselves, but the shades and fancies, wanton, superstitious, effeminate or froward minds, do raise about 'em, disturb the quiet and repose

repose of Man. So then, if we our selves do not multiply the number of our Evils, our share of Good in life may be much greater than our share of Evil; and if we be not accessory to our own Misery, we may be happy. Unless,

Secondly, Evil hath so much of Venom and Malignity in it, that a little Evil contributes more to our Misery, than a great deal of Good can to our Happiness. We may judge of the force and energy of Good and Evil, either by that influence they generally *have*, or that they *ought* to *have* upon the state of Mankind, if we consider what impressions they *ought* to make upon Men, the question will come to a speedy and a happy issue; for then we must either reckon nothing an Evil but a Moral One, that is, Sin and Vice; or at least we must acknowledge that the Venom and Malignity of other Evils is not comparable to that of Moral Ones. This latter Opinion is an unquestionable Truth: for who will not make a wide difference between a Misfortune and a Crime, between an Affliction and a Punishment, between those Inconveniencies, Trouble, and Pain which we suffer as

2. The Efficacy of Evil not greater than that of Good. Natural Evils contemptible to the Vertuous. Moral ones avoidable.

guilty Criminals, and those we suffer as unfortunate Innocents, or afflicted Heroes or Saints : For notwithstanding the Evils or Pains should be in the matter of 'em the same, yet there is a vast difference in the suffering ; the one makes Man much more miserable than the other ; for our Misfortunes only reach the Body, not the Mind : But when we suffer for our Crimes, the whole Man suffers, the Soul as well as Body : Misfortunes, when the Storm is o'er-pass'd, leave no deform'd ruins, no wounds nor scars behind 'em ; but our Crimes leave stains and guilt behind, which haunt the Mind with perpetual horror. From this distinction of the nature and effect of Evils, we may infer this comfortable Conclusion, That nothing can make Man wholly truly miserable, but himself ; Nothing can oppress him by the weight of Moral Evils, but his own choice, for nothing can compel or necessitate him to be wicked ; the strokes, the wounds of Natural Evils (so I will call all the rest distinct from Moral, and owing their Being to the revolutions of Time, and Chance, and Nature) are faint and slight ; the Mind of Man ought not to suffer it self to be too deeply and sensibly

sibly affected by them. It is the work of Reason and Religion to fortifie the Mind against the impressions of these Evils : and truly that Mind that is furnish'd with true Notions of things, with a rational and solid Faith, with steady and well-grounded Hopes, may bear the impetuous shock of all these Waves and Storms calm and unmov'd ; nay, I may boldly affirm, not only that Vertue checks and controuls these Evils, blunts their edge, and abates their force ; but, what is more, that their natural strength, their own proper force is weak and contemptible, unless our own Vices be combin'd and confederated with 'em against us. Our Pride must aid our Enemy to render his affront provoking ; our Covetousness and Ambition must assist Fortune to render its contempt or hatred of us destructive to the tranquillity of our state. Falshood under a disguise of Friendship could never have abus'd our Confidence, by betraying our Infirmities, or forsaking us in affliction, had not our own folly and self-conceit first betray'd us, exposing us a naked prey to flattery and treachery. The coldness or neglect of Great Men could never wound us ; the

hollow deceitful professions of those above us, could never fool or fret us, did not the fondness of our own desires betray us first into vain presumption, and a flattering credulity. The storm that snatcheth away a Relation or a Friend, could never overthrow me, if I stood upon my own bottom, if I were not guilty of one of the greatest weaknesses, of placing my Happiness in any thing out of my own power, and so making my self dependent upon another man's Fancy or Fortune. Finally, Death it self must derive its terrors from the mournful Solemnities we dress it in, from the darkness and horrors of our deluded Imaginations ; or else it would prove but a contemptible Bugbear, a very considerable Evil, or *none at all*. Thus 'tis evident, That if we distinguish Evils into Natural and Moral, we shall have little reason to think the influence of Evil so malignant and deadly, since 'tis in our own power to avoid Moral Evils ; and Natural Ones strike but half way, they wound not the Soul that is arm'd and guarded with Reason and Religion.

But

But now, if with the Stoicks we should admit of no other sort of Evil but what is Moral, if we should allow the name of Good to nothing but Vertue, or of Evil to nothing but Vice, then we must look upon temporal and external Misfortunes as Inconveniences and Disadvantages only; they may make us less happy, but they cannot make us miserable. And truly, if we should here suppose or take for granted, That there were another Life, or that the pleasure of Vertue triumphing over Calamities and Afflictions, were considerably great; this Opinion cannot imply so great an absurdity as some would fasten upon it, or be a meer λοζομαχία, or idle contention of words, since I cannot tell with what consonancy to Truth, or propriety of Speech, we can call those troubles or hardships Evils, which directly tend to procure for us an infinite Good, or a Pleasure which doth abundantly out-weigh our Sufferings.

I think 'tis now sufficiently evident that natural Evils are not of that mighty efficacy & deadly venomous quality, that it should be thought that a little Evil doth more effectually contribute to our Misery, than

What impressions Evils do in fact make upon men.

than a great deal of Good can to our Happiness: 'tis apparent how slight the Impressions are which they *ought* to make upon us. It will now be time to consider what impressions they do generally make upon us, what their real Effect commonly is, how men generally are mov'd and affected by them. 'Tis true there are some that mix Heaven and Earth upon every slight occasion, that will receive Good but no Evil at the hand of God, most insensible of Blessing, but extremely tender and sensible of any Evil; but this speaks not the nature of Evil, but of the Man; it speaks him ingrateful, but not the Evil intolerable. Nor is humane nature to be measured by this whining querulous humour of a few, but by the sense and temper of the Generality; amongst whom 'tis easie to observe, how Instinct teaches us to elude the stroke and force of Evil, Nature opens its Arms and enlarges it self to receive good, and all the powers of the mind greedily strive to share in it; but it contracts and shrinks, retires and stands upon its Defence at the Approach of Evil, 'tis apt to flatter it self, and apt to hope, apt to lessen Evil,

Evil, and magnifie Good, apt to put off the thoughts of approaching trouble, and to anticipate its Pleasures; 'tis full of great Designs and gaudy Projects, and easily prone to delight, and content it self with thin, airy, and imaginary Schemes of Good; this and much more is evident in a Thousand daily instances of humane life, by which 'tis plain, Nature in the contrivance of Man kindly design'd to fit and dispose him for Happiness, by giving him such Inclinations as might serve to lessen the Evil, to increase the Good, to supply the Defects of this mortal and imperfect state. Is it not manifest that whereas Evil looks less to us, Good looks bigger at a Distance, we are willing to help Fortune, and call in the Aids of Fancy to adorn and enrich her gifts; nor is it easy to defeat man of this Humour, he dreams of a bottomless Abyss in every Good, in every Pleasure, and notwithstanding the daily Confutations of Experience, he still desires to repeat his Enjoyments o're again, as if he did still hope to find some new untasted sweet, some pleasure undiscover'd, untry'd before: how apt are we to flatter our selves,

selfes, and willing to be flatter'd, every Man represents himself and state under the fairest Idea that he can possibly frame of it, and turns away his Eye and Thought from every thing that may offend him: Beauty, Strength, Health, Understanding, Wisdom, Reputation, Attendants, Power, Wealth, and whatever future Good he can form, tho but a slender Pretension to, make up the gay Idea, nay, and even long life and undisturb'd security, are there drawn as two Pillars to support the Building; the daring but kind Confidence of Man that makes himself the Master of Fate and Fortune! if you should mark this Tablet with ever so prying and curious an Eye, you would not be able to discover either Deformity or Folly, or Dishonour, or Poverty, or Disease or Death: for these, Man, kind to himself, banishes far from his Thoughts, and suffers not to enter into the Portraiture of himself: And hence 'tis, that most men never disturb life with the Apprehension of its End, and never feel Death till they are dying; Kind Instinct shewing us an easier way to lessen this Evil, than the Reason of most Philosopho-

Philosophers ever could, making our suffering extremely short, and even then too almost in the midst of Death, men fondly dream of, and hope for life, and can scarcely suffer their hope to expire in the last gasp: Nay, so willing to be deluded, so easy to be impos'd upon, are men, that they make even those things which are the Trophies of Death, and the Monuments of Man's frailty and vanity, minister to them some slight Comforts at least against Mortality; they divert and entertain themselves with the Mourning and Pomp of their Obsequies, with Blacks and Tombs, with the dying Echo's of surviving Reputation, and with the grandeur and felicity of their Posterity; as if they did fondly persuade themselves, that they should be concern'd in all these things, that something beyond the Grave did relate to them, and that they did not utterly perish and dye. And if this kind as well as obstinate hope do in some measure break the force of the greatest Evil, that is Death; we cannot but expect that it should be highly serviceable to Man in moving him to despire, or enabling him to vanquish less evils; hence 'tis that

no

no examples of the Inconstancy or Change of Fortune, of the incertainty of Royal or Popular favour, no Instances of slighted Service, deluded Hope, sudden Death, or any thing of this kind are sufficient to discourage the attempts, the pursuits of Man-kind after worldly things, we boldly adventure upon those Seas which we see scatter'd over with numerous Wrecks, and confidently pursue those Paths, where we every moment meet with the ominous Ruines of disappointed hope, and fruitless drudgery, and baffled presumption. Thus it is, I determin'd not that thus it ought to be, I examin'd not what is here the office of Philosophy, or the work of Vertue, I have barely represented the humour and inclination of Man, only that you may see, that he is not such a defenceless, shiftless Creature, but that his Reason dares confront, and can vanquish Evils in open Battle, and by downright force, and his instinct elude 'em by various, and those (if well conducted) useful and innocent Arts. It doth therefore manifestly appear, that as the number of Evils, is not greater than that of Goods, so, neither is the
Vigour

Vigour and Energy of the one, so much greater, than that of the other; that a little Evil should out-weigh a great deal of Good, that a little Evil should contribute more to a man's Misery, than a great deal of Good to his Happiness. There remains nothing further to be examin'd, but

Thirdly, That Fancy which ascribes Man's portion of Good and Evil, to time or chance, &c. not Man's Vertue or Industry, to any thing but to himself; and he that can with Confidence affirm this, may with as good grace assert, that there is neither Wisdom nor Folly in the World; for if there be, this Imagination must soon vanish, since Wisdom is nothing else but the choice of true Good, and rejection of Evil, the pursuit of our true Happiness, by all the most rational and probable means, and a declining and flying from all those things that are repugnant to it. And tho' success and good fortune do not always attend Wisdom and Vertue, yet you shall never persuade any but Madmen or Fools, that 'tis in vain to be Vertuous, or irrational to be Wise. *Solomon* has indeed observ'd as an instance or proof of the vanity of all things,

That

3. Man's
Good or Evil depends
upon himself, from
the nature
of Wisdom
and Folly.

- Ecclef. 9. *That the Race is not to the swift, nor the Battle to the strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to men of Understanding, nor yet favour to men of Skill:* I exempt not the wise from subjection to Time and Chance, which is all that *Solomon* complains of here; but notwithstanding I must ever think with him,
- Ecclef. 2. *that Wisdom excels folly, as much as light doth darkness; not only because chearful, delightful to it self, but also because 'tis the happiest guide of humane Life, blest generally with success, as well as Rich in intrinsick Good, and in some measure self-sufficient: nor does our English Proverb, Fools have the fortune,* imply any more than that the prosperity of Fools is to be imputed to their Fortune, that of wise men to their Merit, that success does commonly wait upon Vertue and Wisdom, and nothing but an extraordinary Chance can turn it upon the Fool or Sinner; tho all this while I understand Success in things necessary not superfluous, for I cannot see how it can be any disparagement to Providence to turn that plenty another way, which would not like soft distilling Rains and Dew, cherish, refresh and increase

crease the tender Plants, Wisdom and Vertue, but like a Flood wash away the Earth from their Roots, and either utterly extirpate 'em, or leave 'em oppress'd and buried in Rubbish: If this were not true, if the Experience as well as Reason of Mankind did not confirm it, Men would not serve Apprentiships to Trades, Men would not study Arts or Sciences, Men would not strive with toil and hazard to make their Point, but lazily and securely stay till Fortune rain it's Golden Showers into their Laps.

By a Recapitulation of all that has been hitherto discours'd, it may easily appear how far I have advanc'd in the proof of that assertion, I undertook to make good, namely, that Happiness may be attain'd in this World; I have shew'd, that some are happier than others, or at least less miserable, and that this difference of Condition or State is to be imputed to the Vertues of some, and the Vices of others. I have prov'd that the World abounds with good things, that there is no Appetite nor Capacity of man, that may not find Objects proper and agreeable, and such as in a great

measure may delight and satisfy; and that man is endow'd with such a variety of faculties and senses, that there is scarce any thing in all the variety of Beings the World contains, which he is not capable of enjoying. From whence it clearly follows, that Man may be happy in the Enjoyment of these good things, unless the Evil of life sowre and imbitter the Good, or the attainment of the Good be out of the power of Man, to remove all suspicion of both which, I discours'd something tho' briefly, of the nature of Evil, and the Nature of Man: evincing plainly the Impotence and Feebleness, of the one, and the Strength and Preparations of the other; and for the Close of all, I have endeavour'd to make it manifest, that Good and Evil are not so much the result of time or chance, &c. as the necessary consequence of Wisdom and Folly. From all which the Conclusion that naturally arises is this; That if Man be miserable, 'tis his own fault, or which is all one, a man may be Happy if he will, which was the thing to be proved.

A Recapitulatory Conclusion.

Let us try now by a close application of all that has been said to the Wants and

and Necessities of Mankind, what the Evidence, what the Conviction, what the real use and force of this Discourse is. I am unhappy, I am miserable; who'e're thou art. that say'st so, thou must needs mean one of these two things. Thou do'st enjoy no good, or art oppress'd with Evil: If the latter, I demand what Evil? speak out, speak plainly. There are three sorts of Evils; the Evils of the Mind, the Evils of the Body, the Evils of Fortune. Which of these art thou oppress'd by? The Evils of the Mind? These are either sinful Passions, or what is the Effect of them, guilty Fears: nothing can compell thee to be wicked, cease to be wicked, and thou wilt cease to fear. The Evils of the Body? they are generally the Effect of unruly Passions and a disorderly Life; and where they are not, the Pleasures of the Mind will out-weigh the Pains of the Body. The Evils of Fortune? 'tis in thy Power, whether these shall be really Evils, or no; they befall thy Possessions not thee: the foolish and vicious mind only suffers in these, the Wise and Vertuous one is much above them; 'tis therefore thy own fault if thou be

oppressed with Evil. But wilt thou say the former? I enjoy no Good, no satisfactory Good. Why, is there no Good to be enjoy'd? I have already prov'd the contrary; and if I had not, how easy were it here to do it? there's truth to entertain thy Understanding; Moral Perfections to delight thy Will; Variety of Objects to treat thy Senses, the Excellencies of the visible and invisible World to be enjoy'd by thee: why then dost thou defer to live? why dost thou not begin to enjoy? here 'tis Evident that thou must be forc'd to say one of these Two things, either that thou art not capable of Enjoying these Blessings, or that they are out of thy reach, out of thy power: to say thou art not capable of 'em is to renounce the faculties of thy Soul and the senses of thy Body: to say they are out of thy reach, is in Effect to say that Vertue and Vice, Wisdom and Folly are all one; or which is every jot as absurd, that thou art wicked and sottish, and canst not help it. And this is that indeed which in Effect, all do say that accuse Fortune, or Fate, or Nature, or any thing but themselves as the Causes of their Misery: and yet as
absurd

absurd as this is, it must be now examined, because the minds of men are perverted and discouraged by such Notions, I will therefore now proceed to the next thing, that is, to answer the Objections against the attainment of Happiness.

CHAP. III.

God not the Cause of Man's Misery.

Obj. 1. *Imputing to God Man's Misery, Answered; and God's Goodness and Holiness Asserted. The Transition to the Objections. The Importance of right Notions of God. Polytheism, Superstition, and Atheism. The Issue of Wrong ones. Sect. 1. Of the Goodness of God. 1. God proved infinitely Good, The absurdity of the Contrary. God the Original of all Perfections. The Testimony of Pagans and Scripture.*
Obj. 1. *From God's dealings with the Pagans, Answered. Obj. 2. Other Dispensations Vindicated. 2. Of the Influence of Gods Goodness on Man, Whether Gods Goodness extend to Man,*

concerns not the main Objection. That it does, is proved. From whence inferred, 1. That God is not the Cause of Man's Misery. This proved by Reason and Authority, Humane and Divine. 2. That he is forward to assist Man in acquiring Happiness. 3. Divine Assistance, what it imports. The manner of it consider'd and freed from Contradiction: This assistance further proved in Fact, by Gods Government of Christians, Jews, and Pagans. The Idolatry of the Philosophers, Examined. Sect. 2. Of God's Holiness. From whence is Inferr'd, what is necessary on our side to Intitle us to Divine Assistance.

Would Men talk coherently, the Assertion of my former Chapter would meet but few Opposers; none can be rationally allowed to deny the possibility of Happiness, but, such as assert Fate: For he that leaves to man his Liberty, leaves him in a capacity of Happiness; it being hardly possible to conceive, that Man should be free in his choice of Good or Evil, and yet necessarily or unavoidably Miserable; besides

besides, few of those who are fond of Fate, are willing to extend its Empire over the Liberty of Man's mind; it being as easy to confute their Fancy, if they did, by some instance of a free Choice, as it was by moveing or walking to confute his, who deny'd Motion.

If it be in the next place considered, that none can rationally maintain Fate, but such as deny a God, since the belief of a God does naturally include his Creation and Government of the World, and this again as naturally infers, either Vice or Vertue, Rewards or Punishments: but on the other hand, the denial of a God, and the admitting no Principle of all things but *Matter*, does not only introduce a fatal connection and dependance of Events on their Causes, but also renders every motion of the mind of Man as necessary and determinate, as that of Fire, Wind, or Water: All this put together, amounts to thus much, That none should exclude Happiness, but such as exclude God and Liberty out of the World; and since very few I hope are Guilty of this, I ought to have very few Antagonists.

But when I am to answer Objections, I am not to consider so much what Men should say, as what they do, nor must I chalk out my own Path, but follow men in that they take, tho it be far enough from being the nearest way. Since therefore Men are wont to impute their Misery one while to God, and another while to Chance, now to Fate, and anon to Incapacity, I must examine what Truth or Justice, there is in these Complaints.

In this Chapter therefore, I shall not only vindicate God from all Aspersions and Calumnies, but also fully assert the love of God to Mankind, whereby, I shall not only baffle all the poor pretences of such as charge God directly, or obliquely, with their Misery, but also more strongly establish my own Position, by demonstrating Gods readiness to Contribute all Assistance that is necessary to our attainment of Happiness; In prosecuting this, I shall

First, Evince the Importance of entertaining right notions of God.

Secondly, Because of all Gods attributes, his Goodness and Holiness have the

the most direct influence on the present Question. I shall particularly confine my self to these Two: To begin with the *First*, If what *Epictetus* said with respect to many Gods had been spoke, with respect to one, nothing had ever been said with more exact truth or a better pois'd judgment.

True notions of God, of great importance.

The first and chief thing in Religion is to have rational and true Notions of God, it being otherwise impossible that Religion should serve the great

ὅτι περὶ τὰς θεὰς εὐσεβείας ἴδι ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνο ἐστίν, ὁρθὰς ὑπολήψεις περὶ αὐτῶν ἔχειν. *Epicteti Enchirid. c. 37.*

Interest of Gods Glory, and Man's Happiness, for false and unworthy Notions of him must needs bereave God of the Honour and Worship due to him from his Creatures, by alienating the Minds of Men, and betraying 'em into Superstition, Idolatry, or Atheism: and thus that Religion which was designed to glorifie God by the manifestation and acknowledgment of his Divine Excellencies and Perfections, and to advance Man into a state of Blessedness, by influencing his life, and filling his Mind with Security and Chearfulness, shall be perverted to Ends directly contrary, and prove instrumental to dishonour God

God and render Man miserable. The truth of this has been too too Evident in those visible Effects of Ignorance, or misrepresentation of the Divine Nature, amongst the Gentiles, the want of conceiving aright his Omnipotence and Imensity, &c. joyned with the numerous Necessities of Mankind did bring forth or at least confirm Polytheism; Groundless Apprehensions of Cruelty in God brought forth Superstition, and the Absurdities of Polytheism and Superstition gave Being to Atheism: and at this Day there are many mischiefs which I must impute either to false Notions of God, or want of just Consideration of the true ones, or at least to not arguing clearly and truly from 'em. For from one of these Reasons it proceeds, that the Worship of some men is so slight, empty and trifling; the Religion of others so melancholy and uncomfortable, and truly Superstitious; and I am afraid there is too much of Atheistical looseness, sensual, carnal Presumption, and wretched Despair, and many other Evils owing to the same Cause; had Men worthy Notions of God, how were it possible they should ever fancy, that God would

would accept the Sincerity and Devotion of a Communicant sitting but not kneeling? after Supper, but not in the Morning? that the whiteness of the Garment would pollute and unhallow the Spiritual Sacrifice of Prayer and Praises? and such like. Would not a right Notion of God easily convince such a weak and scrupulous trifler, That God were not to be pleas'd but by sincere and substantial Holiness and Righteousness, nor to be displeased but by voluntary wickedness? All things else weighing nothing in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and not deserving the Notice or Regard of the Governour of the World: and tho such a one should suppose his scruples warranted by Divine Command, and consequently because the Sovereignty of God renders all his Commandments indisputably Authoritative and binding, he should therefore think himself as indispensibly obliged to reject these things, as to shun a Sin; yet even here a right Understanding of the Divine Nature, would soon instruct him how to distinguish the Divine Commands, and teach him that those which did enjoin Holiness and Righteousness
were

were the standing and fundamental Laws of the Divine Government; that those which did enjoyn Duties subservient to that end were of an inferiour Nature, and did bind in proportion to their necessity and tendency; that such as did enjoyn or forbid things of a more remote and distant Nature, Circumstantial, Ritual, &c. were meerly Positive and Arbitrary, Temporary and mutable, and the interposing Necessity of Superiour Duties is at any time sufficient to supersede their Obligation. To proceed to other Effects of mis-conceptions of the Divine Nature, how were it possible that any one who rightly understood the unspeakable goodness of God should, after he had done all he could, be tormented with doubtful Fears, and Jealousies concerning his state, nay sometimes with a melancholy dread of God, as if he were a hard Master and impossible to be pleased? or how could such a perswasion as this, That one were Damn'd from Eternity, and that neither Prayers, nor Tears, nor Industry could ever reverse the fatal Sentence, find any Entertainment in that Man who were possessed with a true sense

sense and firm belief of the boundless love which God has for all his Rational Creatures?

It is evident therefore, of what importance 'tis to propagate and settle in the Minds of men a right Understanding of the Divine Nature; And of all the Attributes of God, there are none that have a more immediate and powerful Influence either upon the Conduct of Man's Life or the Comfort of his Mind, than these two, his Holiness and Goodness: These make us willing and desirous to believe that there is a God, these make us love him and depend upon him, as one from whom we may rationally expect all that is Good,

He that comes to God (saith St. Paul) must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all those that diligently seek him. These words do not only assert the Being of a God, but also his Holiness and Goodness; both which may be clearly infer'd from three Propositions couch'd in those words of the Apostle, *that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*: First, That all men may seek God diligently if they will; Secondly, that it is the desire of
God

ὅς οὐρανός,
καὶ διοικῶν
τῶν πάντων
θεῶς καὶ
ἀνθρώπων.
E-
pict.

God that they should do so ; and Thirdly, That God will reward all that do so : On these Principles , is Religion founded, on these Principles the Honour of God, and the Happiness of Man must be establish'd : I will therefore discourse here, First, of the Goodness ; and Secondly, of the Holiness of God, which I distinguish from one another only for Methods sake. Treating of the Goodness of God, I will

First, Prove it by undeniable Arguments.

Secondly, I will show that it extends it self to Man.

Thirdly, I will explain the Nature of Divine Assistance, I mean that which God vouchsafes Man in order to Happiness.

First therefore , To begin with the Proofs of God's infinite Goodness.

Of the Goodness of God.

Cruelty was the Property of the Gentile Gods ; and not of the true God, Humane Blood in which the *Canaanites*, *Carthaginians*, and others sacrific'd, was an Oblation fit for *Baal*, *Molech* &c. that is, for Devils not for God : Innate Wrath and Cruelty is inconsistent with

a Happy Nature or a Happy State, for these are furious and tormenting Passions: nor can we imagin that such a Being should make it's Residence in Heaven, a place of Peace and Love, or be delighted with Hallelujah's and Adorations of Angels: This were no Pleasure, no Musick to a Being in whom Wrath and Cruelty were Predominant. Nor were those Good, those Holy, those Charitable Spirits fit Attendance, fit Ministers for such a Being; No, could we suppose (as some Hereticks once fancy'd) that there were two first Principles, a good, and bad one? could we suppose there were an Evil God? one in whom Cruelty, and Wrath were his beloved Attributes? We must necessarily conclude that he would make Hell his Court, that his Guards and Courtiers would be Fiends and Furies, and that the shrieks and torments of wretched Creatures would be the Pleasure, the Harmony he delighted in; this were a God fit for a *Hobbist*, one who can discern no difference between Vertue and Vice, between Good and Evil, between Love or Charity and Devilishness. And yet, I cannot in Charity but retract

tract and condemn this thought ; for Oh ! no other God is fit for him, but he whom he denieth ! no other God is fit for such a Wretch but the God of Love and Mércy ! to whom I recommend him and proceed.

All who believe a God, must believe him a most perfect being , for whence else should the scatter'd perfections of his Creatures have Beginning ? But if any man will say , that there is no difference between Perfections and Imperfections, I would know, why doth he reverence Wisdom more than Folly ? or why he doats on Beauty rather than Deformity ? or if he tell me, that he acknowledges a Distinction between Natural, but none between Moral Perfections or Imperfections ; not to urge that the Vertues of the *Will* are as truly natural as those of the Understanding , the Capacities of and Aptitudes to each, being born with us, not the habits, and the one being as agreeable to the Nature and Consonant to the Interest of Man as the other ; I will ask him, why he does not love the froward and Peevish, as well as the Sweet and Gentle ? the Cruel and Implacable, as well

well as the Kind & Charitable? the Proud and Wilful, as well as the Humble and Modest? & whatever answer he gives me, will abundantly serve to refute his fancy; If then, there be Natural and Moral Perfections, and God be the most perfect Being, we must needs ascribe to him those Properties which we look upon as Perfections in his Rational Creatures, & that in such degrees as exempt him from all Imperfection; if therefore Goodness, Charity, Clemency be universally acknowledg'd for Perfections, we must necessarily suppose them in God in the most perfect Degree: Nor let any one think it absurd, that the same should be the Vertues of God and Man, of a finite and an infinite Being, for we suppose them in God in a manner suitable to His Majesty, and in Man in a manner suitable to his meanness; and unless we acknowledge this, there cannot possibly be any settled and certain Reason for our Love, or Hope, or Dependence, the great parts of Divine Worship: That therefore God is Good and Merciful, a lover of Mankind, was ever the constant and unanimous sense of the wise and good part of Mankind: Poets indeed and Painters degenerate, dastardly, cruel

G

and

and vicious Men did represent the Deity under hideous Shapes, and in such Colours, as their guilty Fears or Vices furnish'd them with; but Philosophers,

Αποδεικνύντων ὅτι τὰ
Θεῶν σεμνότητα μὴ
χρηστοῦ καὶ μεγαλο-
φροσύνης, μὴ βίας καὶ
κηδεμονίας, Plutarch De
Superstitione.

as *Plutarch* observes, were always wont to represent him most amiable and lovely, always tempering his Majesty with Love and Goodness, his Power and Justice, with Tenderness,

Mercy and Compassion towards Mankind. Hence it was that they were wont to attribute all those things that were extreamly useful and beneficial, to God as the Author of 'em, as Government, Laws, Arts and Sciences, they look'd upon their Gods as the Guides and Guardians of Men, and ascrib'd to 'em whatever they atchieved bravely and happily in Life: But on the other hand, frowardness, wrath and cruelty did ever seem so Ugly and detestable to Wise and Vertuous men, that they not only despised, but abhorred as well the wickedness as folly of Superstition, which represented God, or rather dishonour'd him under such Characters.

And

And this Notion of the Deity which represented that Being which was kind and benign, as terrible and dread-

ful; which was gracious and fatherly, as Tyrannical; which was friendly and careful of us, as injurious and hurtful; which was mild and gentle, as fierce and savage; gave such a distast and disgust to all ingenious Tempers, that they thought Atheism a much more excusable Impiety than Superstition; Hence is that of *Plutarch*, (so

generally prais'd by all Writers). I had rather men should say of me, there neither was, nor is such a one as *Plutarch*, than that they should say, that he was

a man of a fickle, unconstant, froward, revengeful and implacable temper. Let us not therefore entertain such an Idea of God, as Humane Nature would recoil from, and start back pale and scared at the sight: Let us not fasten those Characters upon God, which a good temper'd man, if charg'd with 'em

οὐδ' ὅτι δοξάζουσιν φοβερόν τὸ εὐμενές, καὶ Τυραννικόν τὸ πατρικόν, καὶ βλαβερόν τὸ κηδεμονικόν, καὶ τὸ ἀμικτόν ἀγρίον καὶ θρῆν-
ώδες.

ἐγὼ γὰρ ἢν ἂν ἐθέλοιμι μᾶλλον τὰς ἀνθρώπους λέγειν. ὡς ἐμῶ, μὴτε γινόναι τὸ παρ' ἐμῶν, μηδὲ εἶναι. Πλάταρχον ἢ λέγειν, ὅτι Πλάταρχος ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ἁβέβαιος, ἐυμετάβολος, χερὲς πρὸς ὀργὴν, ἐπὶ τοῖς τυχεύουσιν πτωρητικὸς μίκελυστος. Ibid.

would look upon us, as the foulest Reproaches and most injurious Accusations; Especially since a Defect is not only more Conspicuous, but more Reproachful, where there should be nothing but Perfection: And Peevishness and Cruelty are infinitely more mischievous in an Almighty than Impotent Being: I might shun *Polycrates*, *Dionysius*, *Periander*, but how should I shun God? I might leave *Samos*, *Sicily*, or *Corinth*, and where Clemency and Justice made their Abode, I might make mine: But whither should I go, what place should be my Refuge, if the Governour of the World were but an Almighty Tyrant? Thus 'tis manifest, such kind of representations of God, tend not to enamour Man of God, but to alienate and estrange him: they tend not to advance Religion but Superstition; they tend to make Men dread God, but not love him; they are therefore to be banish'd out of the World, and God is to be represented such as our dear Lord, who lay in the bosom of his Father, has reveal'd him, - a God of Hope, a God of Love, a God who is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. This is the Dictate

Dictate of Nature, This is the Dictate of the Spirit, *God is Love*. Let it not be thought an absurd or barren Tautology, tho I should recite this one Text a Thousand times oftner than I do: for no Tongue can expresse the Divine Nature so much to the Life, as his who was inspir'd by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love.

Nor let God's dealings with the Gentile World before the Revelation of Christianity, be alledg'd as an Objection against the Goodness of God, and his Tenderness and Compassion for Mankind; 'tis true, *God in times past suffer'd all Nations to walk in their own ways; and the times of this Ignorance he winked at*: he published no reveal'd Law to the Gentiles from Heaven, he deputed no Prophets to 'em, as to his People the *Jews*, with a Commission to restore by Signs and Miracles, that Natural Religion conformably to which they were to worship God: which is the import of those places of *St. Paul*; and yet 'tis true that the Belief of the Living and true God, and the natural Law of Good and Evil was strangely effac'd and obliterated amongst the Gentiles;

God's dealings with the Pagans vindicated.

Act. 14. and 17.

tiles: but notwithstanding all this, it must be remembered too, 1. That God left not himself without a witness in any age of Gentilism: the Heathen were never destitute of so much Light as might have conducted 'em to God, and that Happiness he design'd 'em: for besides the Traditions transmitted from Noah to Posterity, the Book of Nature and Providence was ever open to 'em, and this did in most legible Characters assert the Being of one Supreme God, and instructed 'em in the Knowledge of his Power and Goodness; Thus St. Paul,

Acts 14. Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness in that he did good, and gave us Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling our hearts with Food and Gladness.

Sunt autem alii Philosophi & hi quidem magni atque nobiles, qui Deorum mente atque ratione omnem mundum administrari & regi censeant, neque vero id solum, sed etiam ab eisdem vite hominum consili & provideri: Nam & fruges & reliqua quae terra pariat, & tempestates, ac temporum varietates, caelique mutationes, quibus omnia, quae terra gignat, maturata pubescant, a Diis Immortalibus tribui generi humano putant. Cic. l. 1. De Natura Deorum.

Nor was this Testimony so unsuccessful, but that in all Ages there were some Excellent men who did ascribe the Original and Govern-

ment of the World to God, and gave such an account of his Holiness and Goodness as was sufficient to have found-

founded a Rational and Excellent Worship upon: these were so many Lights shining in dark places, as so many Justifications of Divine Providence, and Reproaches of Man's wilfull Stupidity.

2. 'Tis not in the least to be doubted, but that the Nature of their Duty and consequently the Condition of their Happiness was Proportion'd and Conform'd to those Manifestations which God made 'em, to those Obligations which he laid before 'em, and to that Strength and Assistance which he vouchsafed 'em: for God is not a hard Master, he will not make good the Accusation of the wicked Servant; *he will not take up what he laid not down, nor reap what he did not sow.* In a word, if God do at the last Day deal with Men according to those several Oeconomies of his Providence which they were under, and if he has afforded all Nations means proportionable to those Duties he required of them, and to those Degrees of Happiness to which he design'd them, then he was always the God of the Gentiles as well as once of the *Jews*, or now of the Christians, and there is no one part

Luke 19.

in the whole series of Providence which can give us any Colour to call into question the Care or Goodness of God towards Mankind. This I think is enough to remove this Objection as it lay in my way: if my design did not hasten me on, and I did not judge this satisfactory, I could easily make appear God's Goodness to the Gentiles, by presenting the Reader with a Scheme of the Religion of the *Pythagoreans*, *Platonics*, and *Stoics*; by examining the Difference of the Idolatry of the Wise and Vertuous part of the Gentile World, and that of the sottish and vicious part of it; by considering the Assistances that God vouchsafed 'em, and giving an Account whence it came to pass that the Worship of one true God by Holiness and Vertue, was so far stifled and oppress'd in the Gentile World: But I have said enough to Vindicate the Goodness of God; and the state of Gentiles and Infidels does not so nearly concern my present Enquiry, as to deserve so exact a Discussion.

*Other dispensations
of God Vindicated.*

The Barrenness of some Countries, the Servitude and Poverty of some People is a much slighter Objection; for
till

till it can appear, that Poverty is an Enemy to Vertue, or that Wealth which is the Instrument of Luxury, and the Nurse of Sloth and Wantonness, is absolutely necessary to Man's Happiness, it will weigh but very little against so many Demonstrations of Divine Love, that he has not heap'd upon all Nations so many Temporal Blessings as might put 'em into a Capacity of being Lazy, Wanton and Insolent.

Now give me leave to make a stand, and like a Traveller when he has gain'd an Ascent, look back upon the way I have gone, and see how much of my Journey I have dispatch'd: My Undertaking was to demonstrate the Love of God to Mankind; thus far I have advanc'd towards this with undeniable Evidence; I have proved, That Peevishness, Malignity and Cruelty cannot belong to God, because this were inconsistent with the Perfection of his Nature, or the Happiness of his State: nor can it rationally be supposed, that the same Properties should belong to those Evil Spirits which for a long time deluded the World, and that God who has done so much to destroy that Kingdom

dom of Darkneſs, and reſcuing Man, to reſtore him to a Capacity of Happineſs and Glory: how could it be, that God ſhould have done ſo much, as it is apparent he has, in the Contexture of our Nature, and the Contrivance of our ſtate, to make us in love with Goodneſs; and irreconcilably Enemies to Tyranny, Cruelty, Arbitrary Revenge, &c. if he himſelf were paſſionate, furious, and arbitrary in his Cruelties? Nay, I have advanc'd further, and have prov'd, *Secondly*, That boundleſs Love and Goodneſs are the unqueſtionable Attributes of God, for the very ſame Arguments which exclude all manner of Imperfections and Evils from the Deity, do neceſſarily aſſert to it all manner of Perfection and Good: Nor doth the unconceivable Majeſty and Eminence of the Divine Nature only, but alſo the Indigence and weakneſs of Humane Nature require this; ſince without it, he could not be the Object of our Love or Dependence, nor conſequently our Worſhip.

Having proceeded thus far and prov'd that Tyranny or Cruelty are utterly repugnant to the Divine Nature; and bound-

boundless Love and Goodness the Essential and Inseparable Properties of it ; I can scarce think it Necessary to prove that the Emanations of this his Goodness do extend even to Man ; for tho the *Epicureans* acknowledging God perfect, did at the same time allow him no other Imployment than the Enjoyment of his own perfections ; and tho *Aristotle* confin'd the Providence of God , and consequently the Irradiation of his Goodness within Heaven ; and tho lastly before the Creation of the World, we are uncapable of conceiving any Subjects, about which Divine Love could exercise it self, and consequently can conceive of it no otherwise than confin'd within himself ; All which seems to conclude thus much that the Deity may be infinitely good, and yet this Goodness not extend it self to man : All this concerns not our present question, for tho Man should not be the Object of Divine Goodness, yet if God be infinitely good, this will be enough to free Man from unreasonable and superstitious fear of him, and to acquit God from the least suspicion of being the Cause of Humane Misery ; which is the utmost

I

I was oblig'd to make good, in pursuance of the design of this Chapter : Besides they who accuse God of their Misery, do not suppose him unconcern'd about all things but himself, as *Epicurus*; nor bound and limit his Providence within the inclosures of Heaven, but do plainly suppose all the affairs of Mankind to depend upon the first Contrivance of God in the Creation, or upon the Over-ruling Influences of his Providence in his present Government of the World.

However, I am not willing to quit one Inch of the ground I have got, and therefore,

The Goodness of God extends to Man.

Secondly, I must now take notice, That the Goodness of God extends to Man, and has a particular Regard to his Happiness. The World being now create, and Mankind form'd after God's Image (*ὡς εἶκός ἐωκμή*, we are his Off-spring, saith St. Paul out of the Poet) unactive and unconcern'd Love seems to me a Contradiction, and infinite boundless Goodness confin'd within Heaven cannot but seem as gross a one: let it therefore remain an unshaken truth,

truth, That God is Good; and that this Goodness doth exert and express it self towards Mankind, and we shall from hence gain these two Points.

1. That God is not the Cause of Man's Misery, and what is more yet,

2. That he is most ready and willing to further and assist him in all his Endeavours after Happiness.

The *First* of these is apparent, for if God be infinitely Good, then every thing that came out of his hands must in the state of its Creation have been exceeding Good; the End of the Creation must have been something extremely kind and gracious, and the Law he prescrib'd his Creatures for the attainment of that End, must be as Good as Wise; this must have been the glorious state of things, when God contrived this wonderful frame of Nature, when he erected this Vast Work the World; and in all the continued progress of Divine Providence we are to expect no other acts of Government than what may become the most gracious Prince, the most tender Father; for the same Immense Goodness that once created,

ted, doth ever continue to rule the World: Let us not therefore accuse God but our selves, if we be not Happy: Blessings indeed and Mercies, like warm Sun and fruitful Seasons, descend upon us without our Importunity or Merit; but Evils and Mischiefs come not till our Sins and provocations have pull'd 'em down upon us: *Solon* indeed in *Herodotus* tells *Cræsus* τὸ θεῶν δοῦναι καὶ ἀρᾶν, That the Deity was envious and froward, and delighted to magnifie it self in the Disturbance of the settled Happiness and Calm of Poor Men: But alas! 'tis our Fondness or our Pride, our Peevishness or our Wantonness, which raises in us these unworthy thoughts of God; he may indeed like a kind Parent, train up a Son through a strict Discipline to Vertue and Glory, he may throw difficulties into our way on purpose to reward our Conquest, he may like a wise Physician restore us to our Health by bitter Potions, and will like an excellent Governour punish, if need be, our wanton Contempt of Love and Mercy, by Severity and Chastisements, but he will never, like a Salvage Tyrant, delight in the Sufferings or Ruine

ine of Innocent or humble Subjects: he will never prescribe Impossible Laws, that he may enjoy the Pleasure of bloody Executions; he will never make the groans of wretched People his Musick; nor think Misery and Death the best marks of his absolute Power, or fairest Ornaments of his Throne; No, we shall never need any other proof to clear the Divine Majesty from any such Imputation, than to Examine our selves and reflect upon our own behaviour, we shall soon find that we alone are guilty of our Ruine, and that God is utterly free from it; our excessive Enjoyments create the Diseases of the Body, and our excessive Passion the pains and torments of the Mind, and most of the Changes in our Fortune derive themselves from both: a languishing Body, and a languishing Reputation, a broken Estate, and a dejected Mind are the Common Effects of a Disorderly and Debauch'd life; and such a life is the natural Effect of a Mind enslaved to the Body and estranged from God, not only by a Neglect, but by a Contempt and Defiance of all those means by which a Good God design'd to bring him through Virtue

tue to Glory; and then at last a guilty Conscience, a distracted Mind, and a most melancholy, miserable Death is the Consequence and end of all: This is the Progress which our Voluntary Sin and Folly makes, we cannot think that a Good God can direct or necessitate us to these Courses; they are as repugnant to his Laws, as to our own Interest, and the same time we forfeit our Happiness, we disappoint his Love and Goodness; all the Ways and Methods of God are Kind and Gracious, and Wise and Rational, inanimate Bodies do not desert those Offices he has prescrib'd 'em, Animals move regularly by those Instincts he has implanted in them, and so both the one and the other do necessarily serve those Excellent Ends, for which they were Created: But Man having no Necessity but Liberty wove into the Constitution of his Nature, and having no Compulsory, but only directing Law prescrib'd him, has perverted his own ways, abus'd his Liberty, and made that his Ruine, which if well-us'd had enhanc'd his Merit and Reward; This is the Account which the Scripture gives us of Man's

Mise-

Misery, it imputes it wholly to himself, and represents his Obstinacy as ungrateful and displeasing to God, as 'tis fatal to himself: *O Israel, thou hast destroy'd thy self: As I live, I delight not in the Death of a Sinner, turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often would I have gather'd thy Children together, even as a Hen gathers her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* Nor is this account of things which the Scripture gives us any other than that which was generally embrac'd by the Heathens, this being not the sense of any particular prepossessions or private Opinions instil'd by Custom or Education, but of natural Reason, and fairly and easily deduc'd from those Notions of Divine Goodness which were universally entertain'd by all judicious and understanding Heathens: and how scandalous a thing were it, if that Comfortable and Heavenly Truth which the Darkneſs and Idolatry of the Superstitious could not extinguish in the Pagan World, should be rejected or

Hof. 13.
Ezek. 38.

Math. 23.

H

sup-

οἱ Θεοὶ ἤβ' χακῶν εἰσιν ἀ-
ναίποι, καὶ νόσοι, καὶ ὅσα πά-
θη σώματι ἀκολασίας ἐστὶ
αἰτίματα, &c. — Γνώ-
σιν δ' ἀνθρώπους αὐδαίρεια
πῆματ' ἐχούσας Τλήμονας —
Jamblichus de Vita Pythag.
l. 1. & 2.

suppress'd by Christians.
Not the Will of the
Gods, but the Luxury
and Riot of Men is the
Cause of those Evils
which infest the Bo-
dy, &c. Hence that Cha-

ritable piece of Heathen Devotion.

Ibid.

Ζεῦ πάτερ ἢ πολλῶν τε χακῶν παυσίας ἀπαντας,
* Ἡ πᾶσιν δείξαις οἶφ' τῶ δαίμονι χρῶνται.

O Father *Jove*, from numerous Evils
free
Mankind, or shew 'em their Ruine's not
from thee,
A Gracious and Benign Deity;
But from themselves —

I will here add a Testimony of *Apu-
leius*, as containing the Sense of the
Platonic Philosophy in this Point of God's
Government of Man-

*Omnia quæ naturaliter & pro-
pterea recte feruntur, Providentiæ
Custodia gubernantur, nec ullius
mali Causa Deo poterit ascribi. A-
puleius de Dogmate Platonis.*

kind: All the Motions
of Providence are wise
and regular, nor must a-

ny Evil be ascribed to God as it's Cause:
But this is not all we gain from the
Assurance of God's Infinite Goodness,
that we have no Reason to apprehend
any

any harm or mischief from him, that he cannot be the Author of our Misery. But we may confidently perswade our selves on the other side,

Secondly, That he is most ready and willing to further and assist us in all our Endeavours after Happiness. And now methinks, I am so far from questioning the possibility of attaining Happiness, that I begin already to feel and enjoy it; I see the Day breaking in upon me from above; how can he choose but be happy who is the Love, the Care of God! I may walk like *Peter* on the Waves, and bid defiance to the Storms, I know I shall never sink, whil'st that God upholds me, who calls me this way to him; I can now easily believe that my temper may be transform'd, my Corruptions may be put off, and I be made partaker of a Divine Nature; since the Spirit of God will dwell with me, the Light of God will always shine upon me, and the Power of God will always succour and aid me; can I imagine as much as any Colour or Pretext, why I should not now be able to attain to an Excellent state of Vertue, or why this

Vertue should not be able to Vanquish all those Difficulties that oppose my Happiness, since I am assur'd that God will not refuse me his Spirit if I ask it, and that his Grace will be sufficient for me?

You see, of what vast Importance this Truth is, That God will be always ready to assist every man in his Endeavours after Happiness; and therefore tho it stand here as a necessary and undeniable Conclusion from the foregoing Discourse, tho the Perfection of the Divine Nature do amount to a little

* Εἰ γὰρ μὴ τέλειον ἐκ αὐταρχίας, εἰ ὃ ἐκ αὐταρχίας ἔπω τέλειον, εἰ ὃ αὐταρχίας, μὴ δὲ τέλειον, πῶς ἰσχυρὸν; αὐταρχίας ὃ δὲ καὶ τέλειον καὶ ἰσχυρὸν καὶ μὲν ἢ τελειότητα τὰ ἀγαθὰ βῆλεται. καὶ ὃ ἢ αὐτάρκειαν ἔχει, καὶ ὃ ἢ ἰσὺν δύναται, βολόμεθα ὃ καὶ ἔχον καὶ δυναμέων καὶ πῶς μὴ δῶ; Max. Tyrius Differ. 22.

less than a Demonstration of it; for * Beneficence to his Creatures is as necessarily included in the Notion of Perfection, as Perfection is in the Notion of a God; yet as well for my own Pleasure, as the Interest of my position which is nearly concern'd in this

Truth, I will dwell a little longer on the Confirmation and Illustration of it: There are three Eminent Acts of Divine Assistance; The *First*, is such a Direction

Divine
Assistance
what it
imports.

ction of the Events of Secular Affairs, that they may tend to our Good: The *Second* is his Assistance of us in the Attainment of Vertue. And the *Third* is, his recruiting us by fresh supplies of Strength in all our hazardous Conflicts and Extraordinary Trials: Now tho I could not give an account of the manner how God performs this kind Work of his Providence, yet ought not that to dissuade me from the belief of it; because we know that our Comprehension ought not to be the Standard of Divine Perfections, nor the narrow bounds of our Imagination be the utmost extent of the Almighty's Power. However 'tis not difficult to explain this Assistance of God in such sort as may free it from the least suspicion of implying a Contradiction.

For *First*, as to his Direction and Conduct of Temporal Events, how easie will it be for us to Conceive this possible to God, if we consider, First, That God can form what Impressions he pleases in the Minds of Men, and inspire 'em with what Affections he shall think most serviceable to his De-

signs ? for there is not the least pretext or colour to imagine that the Soul is any more exempt from the Sovereignty of God, than the Body : or that God cannot do that which the Great, or the Cunning, or the Eloquent, nay the Popular and Ambitious, do seldom fail to do, raise what Passions he pleases in the Mind of Man. Or if we consider Secondly, That the Power and Efficacy of Nature is wholly in his hands, that Life or Death, Plenty or Poverty, every thing depends upon his Will ; for the Winds and Seas, Earth and Air, Fire, Hail and Vapour obey his Voice, and are all of 'em, as often as he pleases the Instruments and Executioners of his Will : he that stills the Ragings of the Multitude, and becalms the Passions of the Mighty ; he at whose command, new Creatures enter upon the Stage of the World, and the old leave it ; what is it impossible for him to do ? nay, what is it this Almighty Governour cannot do, without moving one step out of the Common Road of his Providence, without imploying any extraordinary Instrument, or exerting any Act of extraordinary Power ? for what Secular Interest

terest can there be imagin'd whose Success or Disappointment depends not upon some or other of these natural Causes? And yet we must acknowledge further, Thirdly, That the Almighty has not prefixt or set himself such immutable, unalterable Laws, but that he has reserved to himself the Prerogative of suspending or over-ruling 'em when he pleases, I mean with respect to the Motions of natural Bodies, or Revolutions of Secular Affairs; and if such an Interposal of Divine Power cannot be conceiv'd to be other than a Miracle, I must confess, I do not look upon one Age only, but every Age an Age of Miracles; Nay, I believe such as these wrought every Day for the Protection or Relief of those who depend upon this Governor of the World; For I know not to what purpose I should, like *Jonah* or his Mariners, call upon God in a Storm, if it were never to be laid, till it had naturally spent its force and fury: I know not, to what purpose I should implore the Almighty's direction upon all my Deliberations in perplex'd and intangled Affairs, if I could expect no other Light than what my Labouring

H 4

Mind

Mind could give it self: I know not why I should address my self to God in the Pains and Danger of an insupportable Disease, if the Medicines will be the same, and their Vertue the same, if the Feaver will abate, and it's flames be extinguish'd, or extinguish life in the same degree and manner, if I Pray or if I do not. All these ways of Divine Providence are very plain and intelligible, and therefore 'tis manifest that we may without any absurdity ascribe to God such a Superintendency and Direction over Humane Affairs, as may render the issue of 'em most serviceable to the true interest of those that Worship him.

As to the second Part of Divine Assistance which consists in aiding us in the Attainment of Holiness and Vertue, I do readily acknowledge as far as this is perform'd by the internal Operations of his Spirit, by the Influx of Divine Light or Heavenly Vigour, I do no more understand the *τὸ πῶς* the manner of Sanctification, than that of the Creation of the Soul; This I know, that Vertue is the Rational work of a Rational Creature, 'tis the work of Man, tho

tho assisted by God, 'tis a Rational work which implies the Knowledge of our Duty, and a power to perform it: and therefore this I know, that this aid must consist in the Improvement of my rational Faculties in some accession to the Reason of my Understanding, and to the Power and Liberty of my Will; Now tho I cannot comprehend how God does this, yet how easily can I believe it possible for him to do it, since 'tis natural to imagine, that he who created my Understanding can improve it, and he who invested me with a Rational Liberty can confirm or enlarge it, or, if you please, rescue it from that diseas'd and servile Condition, unto which it was degenerated, and restore it to the health and soundness of its first State?

The Third Act of Divine Providence does not imply a new manner, but a new degree of Assistance, and therefore contains in it no new Difficulty: and as to the Truth and Certainty of this sort of Assistance, no man who believes the Gospel can question it, since this every where ascribes as well *Perfection* as *Conversion* to God, as well the *Finishing* as the *Beginning* of *Sanctification* to his
Grace,

Grace, it every where promises us the *Might* and *Power* of God's Spirit to *Strengthen* and *Establish* us, and *Exhorts* us to *come boldly to the Throne of Grace* that we may *Obtain Mercy*, and *find Grace* to help us in the time of need.

This Time which I have spent upon the Illustration of Divine Goodness towards Man, will not I hope be judg'd misemploy'd or lost, if it be consider'd, that such is the Confidence, or rather such is the wantonness of some Men, that they reject every thing which carries in it, I will not say, any seeming Contradiction, but any seeming Difficulty.

*A further
Proof of Di-
vine Assis-
tance, from
Divine Go-
vernment.*

But it doth not so nearly concern the Happiness of Man to be instructed in the manner, as to be thoroughly perswaded of the Truth of Divine Assistance; and therefore choosing rather to be tedious than defective in the proof of it, I will add to those Arguments taken from the Nature of God, whatever force and strength can be derived from the Consideration of Divine Government, which is the Expression of the Divine Nature, and the Image of its Perfection visible in its Effects.

The Gospel contains this Doctrine in almost

almost every Page, and the Lives of Apostles and Martyrs are so many illustrious Instances of the Divine Faithfulness and Love, performing those promises which he had made 'em by his Son. The Jewish Polity was a Theocracy, God did for a great while preside over 'em immediately, and Govern them (if I may so speak) without a Substitute or Vice-roy; Repeated Miracles, repeated Prophecies, extraordinary Manifestations of himself, and extraordinary Revelations were the illustrious proofs of God's affection and care for that People; so that it were to insult over my Readers Patience, or to reproach his Stupidity, if I should go about to confirm this Truth from the Old or New Testament: 'tis therefore only necessary to Examine what the Heathen thought of the Necessity of this Divine Assistance, and what Instances of it may be found amongst them.

Whether the Gentiles had any Notion of the Fall and Corruption of Man is not here necessary to be enquired, but this I am sure, they were extreamly sensible of that opposition which Virtue met with from the World and the
Body;

Body; they were extreamly sensible that the Inclinations of the one, and the Affluence and Troubles of the other did naturally tend to engage 'em in Vice; and therefore tho they do sometimes magnifie Humane Nature, yet they were not so forgetful of their own Infirmities, or the Condition of this Life, as not to judge the Assistance of God indispensably necessary to render them Vertuous and Happy: Hence 'tis that *Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato* were Eminent in that part of Religion which consists in Prayer and Invocation:

Σωκράτης εἰς Πραξίαν κατ'ἡμέραν προσευξομένης τε διῆναι,
καὶ τὰς ἄλλας περιερέετο, καὶ ἦν ὁ βίον Σωκράτους
μετὰ εὐχῆς. *The Life of Socrates was a Life of Prayer.* And hence it was that they did generally ascribe their Laws to those Gods from whom they received their Oracles; The *Cretans, Romans, &c.* not more confidently believing that they received their Laws from *Minos, Numa Pompilius &c.* than that these received them from *Jove, Aegeria* and other Gods: & I wonder not that *Cicero* should somewhere say, *Nunquam vir magnus sine Divino afflatu, That there never was a great Man who enjoy'd not some Divine Impulse;* since

Max. Tyr.
Differ. 30.

since it did so generally obtain through
 the Pagan World to attribute all the
 surprizing Excellencies, or extraordi-
 nary Exploits of their Heroes and emi-
 nent Men to the immediate Favour and
 Patronage of their Gods. Must *Vespa-* Hist. Rom.
lian restore life to the expiring State of
Rome? Prodigies and Miracles shall
 prepare his way; and the extraordinary
 marks of some Divine Assistance shall
 consecrate and destine him to this great
 Work. Must *Alexander* conquer the
 Eastern World? Miracles shall attend
 his March as it did that of *Moses*, and
 the *Pamphylian* Sea retreat before the Jofephus.
 one, as the Red Sea did before the o-
 ther; Nor let any one think, that this
 was usual only amongst the barbarous
 People, *Athens* it self, *Athens* the very
 abode of Wit and Philosophy did attri-
 bute the Perfections of *Eleusinian Mele-*
sagoras and *Cretan Epimenides* to the In-
 struction of some Divine Being, and
 those of *Socrates* to his Guardian Angel.
 as well as the *Scythians* those of their
Zamolxis, or they of *Proconesus* those
 of *Aristeas*, to the peculiar favour and
 assistance of their Gods; nor ought it
 to seem strange that the Works of *Hesi-*
od,

od, Homer, or other Poets should be ascribed by the Heathens to Divine Inspiration, since those of *Aholiab* and *Bezaleel* are by *Moses* himself ascrib'd to the Spirit of God: for the Poems of the former could not but seem to the Heathens as Rich a piece of Fancy, as the Embroideries of the Latter, did to the Jews: and this puts me in Mind of an excellent Argument *Maximus Tyrius* makes use of to prove Vertue to be derived from the Assistance and Bounty of God, *If Arts* (saith he) *less Excellent in their Nature, and less useful in their End, be owing to God, how much more Vertue the Divine Guide and Comfort of Humane life?* If there be no Good that descends not from above, much less surely the Chief and Sovereign good of Man, ἀλλὰ μὴν ὃ δὲν ἔστιν ἄλλο ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθὸν ὃ μὴ παρὰ θεῶν ἔρχεται. Thus far I have proceeded to shew you what the Heathens thought of the Necessity of Divine Assistance, particularly in the Attainment of Vertue; for as to Secular Matters and Temporal Events their sense of the over-ruling Power and Influence of Divine Providence, was so notorious, that 'tis not to be call'd into question; the
Being

Max. Tyr.
Dissert. 22.

Being and Providence of God (in this sense of it) seem'd so inseparable, that the *Epicurean* who deny'd the latter, could never find belief, when he profess'd himself to own the former; Nay, even those very men who could not be convinc'd of a Providence by the Bounty, were convinced of it by the Severity of God in his Chastisement of Sins, hence that bold and brisk, tho not very Religious Reflexion of *Tacitus* upon the Miseries the Roman Empire suffer'd under *Galba*, *Otho* and *Vitellius*, *Nec enim unquam atrocioribus populi Romani Cladibus, magisve justis Judiciis approbatum est: non esse Curæ Diis securitatem Nostram, esse Ultionem.* The justice and the greatness of our Plagues abundantly evince the Gods concern'd, tho not for our Prosperity, yet for our Punishment; such is Man's disingenuous temper, that he is more easily convinc'd by the wideness and fatality of a Wound, that it was inflicted by an Almighty Arm, than he is by the greatness of the Benefits he receives, that they are distributed by a Divine Munificence; tho the number and infinite value of the good things we receive be in it self a much clear-

*Tacit. l. i.
Hist.*

clearer proof of a Divine Providence, than the Evils we suffer, can be; for these we can create our selves, those none but a God can bestow: there needs then nothing to be said to convince you what the Heathens thought of Providence with respect to outward and temporal things; nor is it I think now to be question'd, whether it were their opinion that the Divine Assistance was necessary to the Attainment of Vertue and Happiness; nor would I add a word more but that the words of *Hierocles* on this Subject carry in them not only so full a Conviction, but also so extraordinary a Relish of a Wise and Religious Humility, that I cannot pre-

Καὶ ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακῶν ἀρχαῖς,
ἢ τε ἐνυποκαίμενης, ἢ τε ἐξο-
θεν κακοποιῶν αἰτίαν ἐνιδέουσι.
ἀγαθῶν δὲ δὴ ἀρχῆς μάλιστ'
καὶ μόνως, καὶ τὸ μὲν καχερισμέ-
νης ἢ λογικῶν ὑσίων, οἷον ἔστιν
ὁ Θεός. τὸ δὲ ἐνυπαρχέουσι αὐταῖς
καὶ τῇ κατ' ὑσίων ἐπαφῇ κωλύ-
νóσης, οἷον ἔστιν ὁ ὁρθὸς λό-
γος. *Hierocles in Pytha-
goræ Aurea Carm.*

vail with my self to pass them by: that is, *We need no Motive or Incentive to Vice but our own Inclinations. But to make us Vertuous we stand in need of the aid of God, join'd with that of Reason.*

And this Opinion of the Necessity of God's

Assistance sprung not only from the Experi-

perience of the weakness and corruption of Humane Nature, but also of the Power and Goodness of the Divine Nature; for I cannot think that the Order, Beauty and Greatness of the Creation, the fixt and constant Returns of fruitful Seasons, *the filling men's hearts with food and gladness*, were the only Testimonies which God gave the Gentiles of himself, and his Care for Mankind: when I read that Angels are the ministring Spirits of God; when I read in *Daniel*, of the Princes of *Græcia* and *Persia*, and find that Provinces were committed to Angels as the Vice-roys and Lieutenants of God, I cannot think, that these Devout and Charitable Spirits did with less Zeal in their Provinces labour to promote the Honour of God, and the Good of Man, than Evil Spirits did the Dishonour of the one and the Ruine of the other: and unless the frequent Appearances of Angels in the Beginning had possess'd Men's Minds with a firm perswasion that there was a constant Commerce maintain'd between Heaven and Earth: and that Spirits very frequently did visibly engage themselves in the Protection and Assistance

of Men; I cannot as much as imagine, what foundation there could be for the numerous Impostures of Oracles, or upon what ground the Custom of putting themselves under the Patronage of some Tutelar Spirit, could so generally have prevail'd in the Pagan World: without this Supposition, the Poetry of *Homer* had been so far from being entertain'd as Sacred and Inspir'd, that it had been universally condemn'd and dislik'd as an idle Rhapsody of unnatural, incredible and fulsome Characters of their Gods: how could any Man, who had never heard of the Appearances of Spirits, nay who could not conceive any other Notion of such Fancies than as something absurd and impossible, ever digest the gross Confidence of a Poet bringing in a God upon the Stage at every turn? I do not therefore doubt, but that the Gentile World received very many good Offices & Advantages from good Angels, as well as suffer'd many mischiefs from Evil ones: and I think I might with good probability believe that every good Heathen as well as *Socrates* had the Assistance of a good Spirit very frequently.

Nor was the Ministry of Angels the
only

only assistance that God afforded the Gentile World, but in every Age he rais'd up wise and good Men to be his Prophets or Interpreters of Nature's Law to the Gentiles: I know St. *Austin* does in two places at least of his Retractions censure & condemn that Charity which he had elsewhere express'd for the Philosophers or Excellent Men among the Gentiles, which is the more to be wondred at, since he so frequently acknowledges himself to have been first inflamed with the Holy Love of true Philosophy by reading a Piece of *Tully*; but were the matter to be carried by Votes, I do not question but I could produce Testimonies in favour of those Men, of such whose Antiquity, Learning and Piety might more than balance the Authority of St. *Austin*: 'tis true, their Faith differ'd much from that of a *Christian*, and no Man, I think, in his Wits could expect it otherwise; for how vast is the Distance between the Light of Nature and that of Revelation? but if we look upon those Motives and Principles to Vertue by which they were acted, they were such as a *Christian* need not blush at, or be ashamed

of: they look'd upon it not only as the Perfection of Humane Nature; the Bond and Support of Society; the Delight, the Guide and Comfort of every particular Man's life; but also as the Image of God, that which did render us like him, and therefore acceptable to him; as the only thing that could unite Man to God, that could raise Man above the bodily Pollutions of sensuality; that could enable him to outbrave the fears of Fortune and of Death; as that which could fit him for the Conversation of Heaven; And lastly, they look'd upon it as the gift of God.

The Idolatry of the Philosophers distinguished from the Vulgar.

'Tis true, together with all this, you'll say, they were Idolaters: I do not question; but they did often partake in the Pollution of the Idolatrous multitude: But if we regard the Idolatry of their Religion, and compare it with that of the Heathen Multitude, there was a vast difference between both; and that in these three Points: the Object, the Acts of Worship, and the Effects of it.

As to the Object, the Philosophers, 'tis true, did worship Spirits, but good ones; the Multitude did worship Devils:

vils: how contradictory are those Characters, which the sensual, infatuated Multitude bestow'd upon their Idols, and those by which the Philosophers describe the Nature of their Gods or their *Genii*? Lust and Cruelty make up the one; Purity, Goodness and Charity the other: This needs no proof, 'tis evident from almost all the Writings of ancient Philosophy that are extant: yet I think it cannot seem superfluous to produce one Testimony containing an Account of the Nature of their *Genii* or Guardian Angels, by which it will be easie to conclude what Notion they had of those Superiour Spirits whom they supposed to dwell always in Heaven in the presence of the Supreme God: and whom, tho they call'd 'em Gods, they thought infinitely inferiour to that one God, their Creator and ours; But yet much Superiour as well in the Excellency of their Nature as Dignity of their place to those Angels which they look'd upon as the Messengers and Ministers of God to Man, and as the Guardians of Man, and the Interpreters or Conveyers of his Requests to God. These

Hic quem dico prorsus Custos, singularis praefectus, Domesticus speculator, proprius Curator, intimus Cognitor, assiduus Observator, individuis Arbitrator, inseparabilis testis, malorum improbator, bonorum probator, si rite animadvertatur, seculo cognoscatur, religiose colatur, ita ut a Socrate justitia & Innocentia cultus est, in Rebus incertis prospector, dubiis praemonitor, periculosis tutor, egenis opitulator, qui tibi queat tum in Somniis, tum in Signis, tum etiam fortasse coram, cum usus postulat mala averruncare, bona prosperare, humilia sublimare, nutantia fulcire, obscura clarare, secunda regere, adversa corrigere. Apuleius de Deo Socratis, p. 68.

are thus describ'd by *Apuleius*, the substance of all which is, This our truly Guardian Angel, our immediate superintendent, the Domestick spy of all our Actions, the Conscious witness of our Desires and Thoughts, the Approver and Encourager

of our Vertue, and the Hater and Discourager of our Vice, if he be heedfully minded by us, rightly known, and religiously worship'd with Righteousness and Innocence, as he was by *Socrates*, will be our Council in doubtful, our Guard in hazardous Affairs, &c. But all this while they were Idolaters? admit it: if they were damn'd for this Idolatry, Good God! what will become of that great part of the Christian Church, whose Practice at this Day is infinitely more inexcusable than theirs was? because God has publicly declared that he has appointed one Mediator, through whom he wills us to approach him: there was then Room for the Plea of Humility; but

but now a pretence of Humility, what can it be, in Reality, but wanton fondness or Presumptuous wilfulness?

Thus widely did the vertuous and understanding part of Mankind differ in the Object of their Worship from the sensual and stupid Herd; and since the manner of Worship is naturally derived from the Notions men entertain of that Being, which is the Object of it; it could not be otherwise, but that they must differ as widely in the Essential parts of Worship, as they did in the Objects of it: Hence it was, that while the People offer'd to their Gods their Lusts and Passions, and sacrific'd to them in Uncleaness or Cruelty, the Philosophers thought that nothing could be so welcome a Sacrifice to Their's as the Imitation of their Purity and Goodness, holy Affections, and good Works: From both these differences there follow'd a

Third, Consisting in the different Effects which the Religion of the one and the other did produce; the Idolatry of the one, (as Wickedness always will) utterly estrang'd them more and more from the true God; the Idolatry of the

other (for so I'll call it to avoid dispute) seem'd to unite them more and more to him, since they look'd upon the Spirits they worship'd, not only as the Creatures, but most lively Images of the true God; and acknowledg'd that all good Gifts proceeded from him, tho they received 'em by the Ministry and Mediation of Angels, and that Vertue which they look'd upon as the only grateful Worship of God did exalt their Minds, and by rendring 'em more like him, must needs render 'em more near to him: Thus they talk'd, whether thus they liv'd or no, is not very material to my present purpose; for after all, tho their lives should not have come up to their Philosophy, these their Discourses could not choose but be some way serviceable to Mankind, being a manifest reproof to the stupid Idolatry, to the brutish and barbarous Worship which then prevailed in the World. These Doctrines could not but manifestly tend to convince the World of the Being and Nature of the Supream God, they could not but tend to restore the Law of Nature to its just Authority, and present the corrupt and degenerate World.

World with a natural, that is lovely, Idea of Vertue ; and give them a just sense of the Obligation they lay under, and of the Sanctions , by which God established that Law which he writ in the Minds of Men : who sees not now, that God by raising up such Men, and by assisting them with a Spirit of Wisdom and a Spirit of Courage which the Constancy of a great many of them in Suffering for these Truths , and the Lustre and Beauty of their Writings in those dark Times do abundantly testify, was an undoubted proof of God's Goodness to the Gentiles , and of his Concern for their true Interest and Happiness : why should not this Light, which God lent the then-wandering benighted part of Mankind, be as kindly interpreted by Man as it was designed by God ? why should not the Philosophers of the Gentiles be looked upon as Priests and Prophets, well enough suited to the Oeconomy of the Law of Nature ? very excellent use have Christians, even the most Learned and Pious made of 'em ; and surely they ought to have proved as much more beneficial to the World they lived in, as they were then more necessary.

I think I have by this time said enough not only to extinguish in any Man all superstitious Fears, and unworthy Apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, but also to enkindle in him a grateful Love of God, and chearful hopes of true Happiness by establishing this perswasion upon unshaken foundations, That God is a Good and gracious God, That he is always ready to further and assist every Man in his Endeavours after Happiness: But now let not that Doctrine be perverted to the betraying of us into sloth, which was design'd to inspire the Mind with a fresh vigour, to quicken and confirm us in an Industrious pursuit after our true Happiness: for we must remember, that God is not only good and gracious, but also

Sect. 2.
*Holiness of
God.*

Holy too; I shall not insist long on this Point, because I think 'tis already proved; Holiness being as necessarily imply'd in Perfection, as Love or Goodness: I know some have talked, as if God were a mere Arbitrary Being, as if his Laws were not the Image or Expression of his Nature, but meerly the positive Precepts of an Arbitrary Will.

If

If any Man can be so senseless, as to believe that the most perfect Being can love or hate without any Reason for't; or that all the Laws and Actions of God shall be Consonant to the Strictest Rules of Justice and Goodness, and all this by Chance, for mere Arbitrary Motion is blind and unguided; such a one seems to me as incapable as he is unworthy of Instruction: I can as soon believe Lightning and Thunder, Wind and Storm a God, as believe him to be a mere Arbitrary Being: The Heathens believ'd a God, *Proteus*, that could turn himself into all shapes; but these Men believe what is infinitely more absurd, a God, not of various and uncertain shapes only, but also of an unfix'd, uncertain, indetermin'd Nature: for the Will must always be agreeable and consonant to the Nature of that Being whose Will it is: thus Liberty and Indetermination of Will in Man proceeds from some contrariety in the Principles which Constitute him; unsteady Judgment produces unsteady Will, and brutish Nature, brutish Will or Inclination. If we consult the Scriptures, nothing is more Evident than the Sanctity of the
Divine

Divine Nature, we are there exhorted *to walk in the Light, because God is Light ; and to be Holy, because he is holy ;* which Holiness doth not regard the Declaration of his Will, but his Nature; this being given as a Motive to oblige us to walk according to his Righteous Precepts , because this alone is that which can please a Righteous God, this alone is that which can make us like & dear to him. From this attribute of God, that is Holiness, we may plainly infer,

First, That we are not to expect any Assistance from him ; but then, when that which we entetprize, is just and lawful, and we our selves are not wanting to our selves ; for 'tis inconsistent with the Holiness of God to make his Providence the Refuge of Laziness or Impiety. Ἀρετῆς ὁ δὲ λαὸς ὁ Θεὸς ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ δουλία προσφαια; , God is the Hope of Vertue, not the Excuse of Sloth and Cowardize.

'Tis a rational and well-weighed Prayer which *Josephus* puts into the Mouth of *Moses* standing on the Shore of the Red Sea ; inaccessible Rocks and Mountains deny'd the Israelites passage one way, the numerous Host of the Egyptians had fill'd all others : before them was the Red

Plutarch
de Supersti-
tione.

Red Sea, whose Waves threatned, as certain and more dreadful a Destruction than the Sword of the *Egyptians*, there was no Weapon for Fight, no Provision for a Camp, no place for Flight. In this Case, *Moses* Prayes thus, *ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς μὲν αἰτῶ- αῖς, &c.* Lord thou knowest, that no Contrivance, Industry, nor Force of ours can here avail us, 'tis in thee alone to find out a way to the Rescue of this People, who by thy Command and under thy Conduct, have left Egypt: despairing of all other ways, we fly to thee alone for Succour; Lord let it come speedily, give us a Clear Proof of thy Divine Omnipotence and Faithfulness; we are in great Straights, great to us, but slight and inconsiderable to thee. The Sea is thine that stops our Progress, the Mountains that shut us up are thine, thou canst divide this Sea, or turn it's Waves into firm Land, and make us find a safe passage through the devouring Deep: or if thou think'st fit, thou canst make us march in Triumph aloft through the open Sky: This was a Noble Faith, this was indeed an Expectation, almost as wonderful as the success it met with: But then, it was no less rational than successful, their Condition was capable of

Max. Tyr.
Dissert. 26.

no Deliverance but a miraculous one, and it was their Obedience to the Divine Commands had reduced them to this Condition: This is a safe Rule to guide our Faith and Reliance by, in all our Distresses and Difficulties, we must have recourse unto God, for these are the times wherein Humane infirmity requires the Support and Comfort of Divine Assistance; The utmost Strength and Perfection of Vertue is too weak to bear the shock and brunt of Calamity alone, *ἡ δὲ δὲ αὐτῇ Θεῷ συνήσθησθαι καὶ συνεργῆσαι καὶ ἐξ ἡμῶν, it must be reinforc'd by Power from above.* But then these Difficulties must be such to which our Vice has not betray'd us; and our own Courage and Industry must be as vigorous as our Prayers: for in vain do we beg new supplies of Strength, if we use not what we enjoy'd before. Divine Bounty doth never supersede Man's Industry, fruitful Showers, and enlivening Rayes do not prevent, but second the Labours of the Husbandman: God observes the same Method in the Production of a nobler sort of fruit, Wisdom and Vertue: the Soul, as well as the Field of the Sluggard shall be o're-run with

with Weeds; there only shall the Divine fruit of Philosophy and Happiness grow where Religious Discipline tills the Ground, and wakeful Study sows the seeds of thriving Truths among the furrows. Accordingly, if we consider the Lives and Practice of Excellent Men, none were ever so much Favorites of Heaven, that it's Gifts grew up in 'em, like Corn and Wine in the Golden Age without Culture or Dressing: Inspiration it self did not exempt Man from the Necessity of Industry, but oblige him to a greater: Thus under the Old Testament a Prophetick Life was a life of greater strictness and retirement than that of others; and in the New, not to mention the Watchings, the Fastings, the Retirements, the Prayers of our Lord and Master, that account of himself which St. Paul gives us, will inform us, not only what his life was, but what it was expected the life of every one should be that shared with him in the Ministry and Dignity of an Apostle. *But in all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses: --- in Labours, in Watchings, By Purenese, by* ^{2 Cor. 6.}
Know-

Knowledge. Amongst the Heathens whatever Perfection and Excellency they attributed to Humane Nature, whatever they attributed to an *εὐνοία*, a Con- texture and frame of Nature more than Common, whatever lastly they attributed to the favour, the Extraordinary favour of God; yet did they always judge a strict life and indefatigable Industry necessary to the acquiring of true Philosophy and Happiness: their *Pythagoras*, so dear to their Gods, that it seemed to be a doubt amongst them, whether he were not himself a God Incarnate, not content to have been the Scholar first of *Pherecydes Syrus*, and afterwards of *Hermodamas*, travail'd first into *Egypt*, and afterwards to *Babylon*, and I know not whither, pursuing Wisdom and Happiness with great Industry, and as great Abstinence. *Socrates*, however inspir'd by his *Genius*, did yet learn Musick of *Connus*, Poetry of *Evenus*, Agriculture of *Ischomachus*, Geometry of *Theodorus*, &c. And to all this he added the Religious Discipline of Mortification even to a voluntary Poverty; what should I multiply Instances? there is not a Man amongst the Gentiles remarkable for
Wis-

Wisdom or Vertue, that is not as remarkable for that Travail and Self-denial by which he purchas'd both ; I add Self-denial , Industry alone being not judg'd sufficient ; for,

Secondly, 'Tis easie in the next place to infer from the Sanctity of God, That they who expect his Assistance should endeavour to be Good and Holy: 'tis Vertue that constitutes a Man a Subject of the Heavenly Kingdom and a Favourite of God, and therefore 'tis this that gives him the best Claim to his Protection and Patronage : Vice is a state of Rebellion and Defiance against God, and he that has put off his Allegiance, cannot expect rationally the Benefits of that Government which he refuses to be under. 'Tis true, the Infinite Goodness and Clemency of God which is not easily vanquished by Man's Ingratitude, may pursue such a Man with repeated overtures and tenders of Grace and Pardon, and may leave him in the possession of common Benefits, such as Health, Plenty, Friends, &c. but God will never confer upon him the most Excellent Gifts, the marks of his especial Presence, and particular Favour, he will withdraw

K

from

Wisd. 1.

Max. Tyr.
Dissert. 26.

from him the aids of his Spirit, and leave him to himself a blind, indigent, and forlorn Creature: *The Holy Spirit of Discipline will fly Deceit, and will not abide, when unrighteousness comes in.* Which is nothing more than what the Heathen by the Light of Nature did affirm concerning his Genius, ἐὰν ᾧ πνεῦμα κακοῦ ἀγγέλους ἑσθλῶν ψυχῶν, ἀνέστη αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνεπιστάτος, *Wicked Souls have no good Angels sojourning with them or presiding over them.* Our Souls, like Temples, must be prepared and consecrated to him, if we would have God dwell in them: Righteousness and Holiness are the only things that Charm and Captivate God, nothing else can invite him to dwell with Man; this very Reason *Maximus Tyrius* assigns for the Residence and abode of a *Dæmon* with *Socrates* after so extraordinary a manner.

Θαυμάζεις εἰ Σωκράτης συνῆν Δαιμόνιον εἶδον, μαντικόν, οὐκ ἀπεπόμνον, καὶ κοινὸν τῇ γνώμῃ αὐτοῦ ἀνακαταβάνον, ἀνδρὶ καθαρῷ μὲν τὸ σῶμα, ἀγαθῷ ὃ τὴ ψυχῇ, ἀκριβῆς ὃ τὴν διαίταν, δεινῷ ὃ φρονεῖν, μετὰ ὃ ἐπαιν εἰς ὃ τὸ θεῖον ἑυσκεῖ, εὐσεβῷ ὃ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον; Idem ibid.

Dost thou wonder that a Prophetic Spirit should dwell with Socrates so intimately united, so friendly, so inseparable, that he seemed only not mixt, and

and become one with his own mind? with Socrates, whose Purity of Body, Charity and goodness of Soul, strictness of Conversation, depth of Judgment, Melody, and perswasiveness of Speech, Religion towards God, and Integrity towards Man rendred him worthy of such a Guest, such a Friend? From all which 'tis evident,

Thirdly, What different Rates we are to set upon the different Gifts of God: *Every good gift, and every perfect gift comes down from above;* but every Gift is not equally Good, equally Perfect, being neither equally necessary, nor profitable. Wealth, Power, Friends, Relations, Health, Strength, Beauty, Wit, Discretion, Vertue, are all good; but not all equal, their value is different, and therefore the Degrees of our Importunity and of our Faith or Reliance upon God, must be proportion'd accordingly: a confident Faith, and an almost impatient Zeal doth well become us when we seek the Kingdom of Heaven and the Righteousness thereof; when we seek of God the Divine gifts of Wisdom and Vertue; but an humble Modesty, and a most profound Submission

James i.

is the Ornament and Beauty of those who are Petitioners for inferiour temporal Blessings: for God has promis'd the former to all that earnestly sue for them, peremptorily and without any tacit Reservations; but his promises of the latter do always imply this Condition, *If they shall be for our Good*; for the Perfections of the Mind are Moral and Immutable Beauties; but those of the Body, and all the gaudy things of Fortune are like the fading Beauties of a Flower, the heat scorches it, the cold nips it, every little chance cracks the stalk, and the hand of a Child will serve to crop it: Nothing therefore is more acceptable to God than the modesty of our Petitions for *these* good things, and the fervency of them for the *other*, nothing more delightful to him, unless the granting of them: the things therefore that we are to beg of God, not only with the greatest Importunity, but also in the first place, are those which

Max. Tyr.
Dissert. 30.

Maximus Tyrius thought the subject

ἢ οἷα τὰ τοῦ εὐχετοῦ ὁ Σωκράτης, ὅπως αὐτοῦ of Socrates his
 χρήματα γένοιτο, ἢ ὅπως ἀρετὴ Ἀθηναίων; -- Prayers, *What*
 ἀλλ' εὐχετο μὲν τοῖς Θεοῖς --- ἀρετὴν ψυχῆς were these? a
 καὶ ἡσυχίαν βίᾱς, καὶ ζωὴν ἀμεμπτον, καὶ virtuous Mind,
 εὐελπίαν δάνατον.

a quiet State, an unblameable Life, and a chearful Death full of good Hopes. These were the matter of his requests, not Wealth or Honour or Popularity. This at once brings to my thought another Objection rais'd against the possibility of attaining Happiness, and instructs me how to Answer it.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Influence of Fortune on our Happiness.

The Independence of our Happiness on Fortune already cleared: and why, further Considered. Fortune what: How far its Sway extends. Fortune pretended necessary to remove the Impediments of Vertue. Every Man the Architect of his own Fortune. Fondness for the World, Springs from Infidelity and Sensuality, and the folly of both. Competency what, and the use of it with Reference to our Happiness. The

tendency of Wealth examined, with Reference to the Mind, the Body, the outward State of Man. The Admiration of Wealth arises from false and gaudy Appearances.

A Second thing which Men charge with the guilt of their Ruine is Fortune. I might pass over this Point slightly, because Afflictions will come more properly to be considered in the Third Volume, where I treat of *Indolence*, and because I have already clear'd two great Truths, which are of themselves abundantly sufficient to baffle and defeat this trifling Objection, Namely *First*, That Vertue and Vice, Wisdom and Folly, are the things to which generally speaking, we owe our Temporal Prosperity or Adversity: and consequently that those, supposing the ordinary assistance of God being in our Power, these must be so too. *Secondly*, That we are assur'd of the Assistance of God, even in these things, as far as he shall see them truly subservient to our Good. However, because the persuasion of the Usefulness, nay absolute Necessity of the favour of Fortune has taken

ken such deep root in the Minds of Men, that it would be thought little less than a Contradiction to imagine that a Man can be *Unfortunate and Happy*, (so that even *Seneca* himself has let fall one of the greatest Paradoxes, a *Stoic* was ever guilty of) such an Expression as this better becoming the mouth of a

Peasant than a Philosopher: *That not only Beginners but Proficients in Vertue, till they have put off Mortality, will*

Sed ei qui ad Virtutem tendit, etiamsi multum processit, opus est tamen aliqua Fortune Indulgentia, adhuc inter humana luctanti, dum Nodum illum exolvit, & omne vinculum Mortale: Seneca de Vit. Beata.

stand in need of some Indulgence of Fortune; and few Men find any belief with the World, when they talk of the contempt of Wealth, it being generally interpreted either the Laziness of an unactive and degenerate Mind, or the Dissimulation of one who affects to be thought to despise Fortune, while he doth secretly and inwardly repine and fret at the Neglect and Coldness she expresses towards him; I will therefore bestow a little time on the Consideration of this Objection.

What dost thou mean by Fortune? If mere Chance, then to envy the Lot of others, or murmur at thine own, is Fol-

*Fortune
what.*

*How far its
Sway ex-
tends.*

ly : if Providence, then 'tis Impiety ; for whatever Goodness guided by unerring Wisdom, doth, must be so well done, that it cannot be mended ; and whatever is meerly in the Power of a blind, giddy, and inconstant humour, (which is the Notion , by which Men choose to express Fortune) can neither be prevented, fix'd nor regulated. But what is it *Secondly*, thou dost put in the power of Fortune ? the Understanding and Liberty of mens Minds ; Wisdom, Temperance, Industry, Courage, and in one word Vertue ? if not, she has no Influence on thy Happiness, she cannot prevent thy attainment of it , nor bereave thee of it when attained : If thou dost, thou dost enlarge the Empire of Fortune too too far, let her rule and insult over Souldiers, Courtiers , Lovers, Factious Demagogues and Time-servers, but not over Philosophers : Let those who are her Minions be her Slaves ; Let her dispose of Money, Lands, Farms, Commissions , Benefices, Honours, Graces, Fame ; nay, if you will , Crowns and Scepters too : Vertue and Happiness, and Souls are too precious Commodities to be the Sport and Traffick of Fortune :

tune : *Solomon observ'd long ago, Wisdom* crys out , *she uttereth her voice in the streets ; She cries in the chief place of Concourse, in the openings of the Gates ; in the City, she utters her words.* Our Saviour in the great Day of the Feast cried, saying, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink:* which is an Invitation of the same Nature with that in the Prophet, *Ho every one that thirsteth ; come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye buy and eat, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* This ever was, and ever will be true ; a great Fortune is not necessary for the Attainment of Faith , Hope, or Charity. And he that is endow'd with these, can't be miserable: you may learn the whole Systeme of Divine and Important Truths, you may acquaint your self with all the Beauty and Enjoyments of Vertue, at a very cheap rate, and you may learn Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, Modesty, Constancy, Patience, Contempt of the World, without the Assistance of much more Wealth than will serve to Feed and Cloath you: and canst thou not be content with these Possessions? is not this a sort of Merchandize

Prov. 1.

John 7.

Isaiah 55.]

chandize to be prefer'd before that of fine Gold ?

Fortune pretended necessary to remove the impediments of Virtue.

I know the greater part of those who accuse their Fortune of their Misery, do at least pretend that their Condition and Circumstances of life are so incommodious, that they have not time to attend to the great Interest of the Soul, or at least not with that Application which they should. Alas, thus not the mean only, but almost all talk, from the Porter to the Prince, the Circumstances of one are too strait, too narrow; of another too full of Trouble, because too full of State: one complains that he is withdrawn from his great End, by the many allurements and sensual temptations, to which his rank and quality in the World exposes him: another that he is daily fretted and indisposed by the little cross Accidents and the rugged Conversation which he is necessarily oblig'd to bear with: one complains of too much Business, another of too little; the hurry and multitude of things distracts the one, Infidel Fears, and Anxious Despondencies the other. One complains that his Acquaintances and Friends are too numerous, and intrench
too

too far upon his precious hours ; another is querulous, melancholy, and peevish, because he looks upon himself either for his meanness, neglected, or for his misfortune deserted and forsaken ; Company is burdensom to the one, and Solitude to the other. Thus all Conditions are full of Complaints from him that trudges on his clouted Shoo, to him who can scarce mention the Manners or the Fortunes of the Multitude without some Expressions of contumely and disdain. Thou Fool, do'st thou not see that all these Complaints are Idle and Contradictious ? for shame correct the wantonness of thy humour, and thou wilt soon correct thy Fortune ; learn to be Happy in every state and every place : learn to enjoy thy self, to know and value the Wealth that is in thine own Power, I mean Wisdom and Goodness : learn to assert the Sovereignty and Dignity of thy Soul ; methinks that if Philosophy could not, Pride and Indignation might conquer Fortune : 'tis beneath the Dignity of a Soul that has but a grain of Sense, to make Chance and Winds, and Waves, the Arbitrary disposers of his Happiness ; or what's worse.

worse, to depend upon some Mushroom upstart which a chance-smile rais'd out of his Turf and Rottenness, to a Condition to which his mean Soul is so unequal, that he himself fears and wonders at his own height. O how I hug the memory of those honest Heathens, who in a rugged Gown, and homely Cottage, bid defiance to Fortune, and laugh'd at those pains and hazards, the Vanity and Pride of Men, not their Misfortune, drove them to! Men may call this Pride, or Spite in *them*; as the beggarly Rabble does usually envy the Fortune which it doth despair of; But there were a great many of these who laid by envied Greatness, to enjoy this quiet, tho generally-despicable meanness: But let the Contempt of the World be what it will, in a Heathen; let it be Pride or Peevishness, Vain-glory or any thing, rather than a Reproach to Christians; what say you to the followers of our Lord and Master? *Then said Peter, Silver and Gold have I none; None?* what hast thou then, thou poor Disciple of a poor Master? a true Faith, a God-like Charity, and unshaken Hope: Blessed art thou amongst men, nothing can

can make thee Greater, nothing Richer, nothing Happier, but Heaven. You see plainly then, a Man may be virtuous, tho not wealthy, and that Fortune which prevents his being Rich, cannot prevent his being Happy.

This Discourse will never down ; This is not calculated for this Age ; Philosophy must be a little more mannerly, and Religion a little more gentile and complaisant than formerly, 'ere it can be adapted and accommodated to the present state of things. Go on then, let's try how far it will be Necessary to condescend ; You cannot be Happy, why ? because you are not *Rich* ; go then to God, and beg you may be *Rich* ; I have not the face to put up such Arrogant and Intemperate Requests to God ; 'tis plain then, 'tis not necessary to be *Rich* in Order to be Happy : for whatever is necessary to this, thou mayest with good Assurance beg of God. But thy Desires are more humble and modest, thou aim'st at nothing but what is very Necessary, a fairer House, another Servant, a dish or two of Meat more for thy Friends, a Coach for thy Convenience and Ease, and a few Hundred Pounds

Pounds apiece more for thy Children :
O Heavenly Ingredients of a Rational
Pleasure ! O Divine Instruments of hu-
mane Happiness ! O the humble and
mortify'd requests of modest Souls ! well,
if these things be so necessary , and
these desires be so decent and vertuous,
if thou canst not be Happy, and con-
sequently must be miserable without
them ; put up a Bill, represent thy Con-
dition in it, Such a one---wants a more
Commodious House , more Servants,
more Dishes &c. and desires the Pray-
ers of the Congregation for Support
under this Affliction : you are Prophane ;
far be it from me ; I would only let thee
see the wantonness of thy Desires : if
thou think'st this would expose thee to
publick Laughter, go to thy Minister,
unfold thy Case to him , let *him* Pray
for thee , he is a good Man, and his
Prayers will go far : you rally and ridi-
cule me. Enter then into thy Closet,
shut thy door, thou may'st *trust* God,
he Pities and Considers even Humane
Infirmities ; I could even almost *in my*
Mind desire it of him, but I am asham'd
to do it in a *Set* and *Solemn Prayer*, I
could almost make the Petition, in the
Gross,

Gross, but I blush to think of Descending to *Particulars*. Well, then I see plainly that Wealth in any Degree of it is so far from being necessary to our Happiness, that it has so little of Usefulness, or Conveniency in it, that in thy Conscience between God and thee, thou canst not think it fit to complain of the want of it.

But this Answer will never satisfy him who complains of Want, or of being engaged in continual Troubles, and toils'd by the daily Changes and Revolutions of the World: I confess it, it will not; But I must tell such a one, if Solomon's Observation be true, *The hand of the diligent maketh Rich*, and that other, *Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean men*: then his Poverty is his Crime as well as his Calamity, he must redeem himself from this his Punishment by Industry and Prayer: As to Calamities, this must be acknowledged, that the Mind of a good and great Man which stands firm upon its own Basis, a good God, a Good Saviour, and a Good Conscience, may remain unmoved, when the Earth trembles,

*Every Man
the Archi-
tect of his
own Fortune*

Prov. 10.

Prov. 22.

bles, and the Sea roars round about him; Changes indeed befall things Temporal, but he leans not upon them; I may say farther, that he who upon mature deliberation, and upon necessary Obligations of Duty engages himself in a just Cause, may be unfortunate, but he cannot be miserable; his Sufferings carry a secret Pleasure in 'em, and his Misfortunes are full of Hope and Glory, if he consider, if he reflect, if he do not feed on vain and airy Projects, and suffer himself to be unwarily transported by very irrational, tho seemingly just Passions: I must lastly add, That 'tis not the Necessity of their Affairs, nor the Iniquity of Times, which doth commonly involve and intangle Men in publick or private Calamities, but some secret Vanity, some blind impetuous Passion, some ill-laid Project, or some treacherous or dishonourable fear. The State of *Rome* never felt more or greater Changes than in the life of *Atticus*, as is obvious to any one, who shall reflect upon the History of his time, and yet in all the turns and mighty Changes of Fortune, *Atticus* enjoy'd a constant Tranquillity and well-settled Peace, being scarce ever
reduc'd

reduc'd as much as to the Necessity of a Retirement but once, as I remember: nor was it the meanness of his Quality, or the narrowness of his Fortune that secured him, he was a Man great in both; nor was it the secrecy of a private life, or the sluggishness of a stupid Mind, which rendred him unworthy of any Man's fear, and unable to provoke a Danger; No, he was a Man, as well for the Eminence of his Parts, and Vigour of his Mind, as for the Largeness of his Fortune, well known to the greatest and most Active men of all Parties; and yet steering his life by the Rules of Vertue and true Wisdom, he lived untouch'd by, unconcern'd in, the strange Alterations of so long a life as his, which were such and so many, that the Historian has observed, that they who were one day in the height of Power and Honour, were the next in the Gulph of Danger and Despair: so that his Remark is generally very true, *Sui cuique mores fingunt Fortunam.* Every man may fashion and shape his fortune as he will his manners. Nor was the success of his Behaviour less in private than publick. For *Cornelius Nepos* has observed in his

L Life,

*Corn. Nep.
in Vita Ar-
tici.*

Life, That those Friendships he entred into, he was very Happy and Constant in; nay, such was the Gentleness, such the Discretion of his Behaviour, that it preserved him in the favour of an Unkle (I think) of his, who was so fowre and peevish that none could please him, such a *Nabal* a man could not speak to him, nay he not only kept in with him, but possessed him so entirely, that he was left his Heir. Nor was all this in *Atticus*, the Effect of Temper or Nature,

Ibid.

but of Vertue: *Neque id fecit natura solum, quanquam omnes ei paremus, sed etiam Doctrina: nam & principum Philosophorum ita percepta habuit præcepta, ut iis ad vitam agendam, non ad Ostentationem utebatur; For he had studied Philosophy not for Ostentation, but the Conduct of his life.* I might now presume I had given satisfaction to this Objection, especially, since I oblige my self to take the Case of Temporal and outward Calamities into full Consideration hereafter. But the infection is got into the mass of Blood, and has diffus'd it self through Mankind, and 'tis not a slight and weak Medicine that can purge it out; therefore I have observed that the Heathen were

were never more copious, or more vehement than in the Refutation of this Errour; our Baptism doth scarce proclaim a more solemn War against the Pumps and Vanities of the World, than Philosophy did in all Ages: No doubt therefore the Expugning this Fancy which makes Man's Happiness depend upon his Fortune in the World, must needs be a matter of great Importance, since both Revelation and Reason have so earnestly and solemnly endeavour'd it; I shall not therefore, I hope, seem impertinent or tedious, if looking upon this Objection as Considerable, in *Opinion*, tho not in *it self*, I treat it with more Respect and Solemnity than it really deserves.

My design therefore is to examine what real Good or Convenience there is in Wealth, how Valuable, or how Necessary 'tis, and that not in a Declamatory or Sophistical, but such a sober and rational manner as may be Satisfactory and Convictive to every unprejudic'd Mind. *First* therefore, I will give some account, whence 'tis that Men are so intent upon their Worldly interest, so wholly bent upon being Rich:

2. Secondly, I will state what is meant by a Competency, and what the Advantage and Necessity of it is. Thirdly, I will consider what the natural tendency of Wealth is. From all which, it will easily appear, what connexion and dependence there is between our Fortune and our Happiness.

1. Reason
of love of
the World,
Infidelity.

If we enquire whence 'tis, men are so intent upon the World; one Reason is, a secret Infidelity, Men are desirous to lay such a Foundation as Time cannot wear, nor Winds and Tempests o'rethrow: they cannot trust Providence, till they see, or at least fancy themselves in a Condition to defie it: and this they look upon as a great piece of Prudence, to provide for themselves a safe Retreat at once from the Storms and Changes that generally pursue Mankind; and the Contempt which unjustly pursues *those* who are overtaken by them: I cannot tell which is the greater, the Folly or the Impiety of this Humour; for 'tis a wretched Folly to flatter our selves with the vain hopes of a Security which is not to be found any where beneath Heaven: or to imagine that a great Estate is less liable to the blasts of Fortune,

Fortune, than a small one; or to fancy that the Contempt which attends those who never rise, is more insupportable than that which attends those who fall: Nor is the Impiety one jot less than the Folly; for what can be more wicked than amidst so many visible and undeniable proofs and assurances of a God, and Providence, to let the same anxious and jealous Fears fill and disturb our Minds, which would scarce be pardonable, if there were neither? what greater Affront can we offer to the Goodness, the Wisdom, the Omnipotence and Faithfulness of God, than to refuse to repose the Care, the Trust of providing for us upon him, when he not only offers, but presses himself upon the Employment?

A *Second Cause* why we so eagerly pursue Wealth, is *Sensuality*; Being Strangers to the Peace and Joy of Faith, insensible of the Divine Delight of Charity, incapable of the Ecstasies, of the full Assurance of Hope, and in general of the Rational Pleasure of a Philosophical Mind; what can be expected but that both Wind and Tide should drive

us violently on another shore? I mean the whole Force and Inclination of our Nature should impetuously tend towards sensual, worldly Pleasures and Enjoyments; & consequently towards Wealth, as the Necessary Instrument of Both: you grant therefore that Wealth is Necessary to a pleasurable life? To a pleasurable one 'tis, to a pleasant one 'tis not. The sensual Pleasure of a sensual Man, *i. e.* one who is all Body and Fancy, requires a good Fund of Wealth, but the Temporal Enjoyments of a virtuous Man do not: I grant, that ease and rest are Necessary to the Sluggish, state and height to the Proud, variety to the Intemperate and the Wanton, and to all this Wealth is Necessary; but I deny that Sloth or Pride, Intemperance (I will add Niceness) or Wantonness is Necessary to our Happiness: nay, I will confidently affirm, that a vigorous Mind and active Body is a much greater Pleasure than sluggish Ease: that an humble, if contented, state is much more easie than Proud Grandeur and the *ἀλαζονεία* *als*; or the *Ostentation of life* in *St. John*, that sober and thrifty Temperance is a far greater Pleasure than Variety, and the

the Modesty, Constancy, and Friendship of a Vertuous affection is not only a more calm, generous and steady, but a more transporting satisfaction than the fancyful Rambles of a wandring Lust: And I hope none will be so fond as to judge Wealth Necessary to the obtaining these Vertues; if any are, their Siliness and Vanity is to be exploded and laught at, not seriously confuted: For who in his Wits can believe, that Ease is the best Nurse of Industry; that affected State and Ambitious Grandeur, are the Parents of Humility and Contentment; That Affluence and daily Delicacies are the most Effectual Instruments of Abstinence; and that Variety is the Mother of Chastity? If not, then 'tis apparent how far serviceable Wealth is, for all that lies in its Power is to provide for us these Temptations: But tho a Wise and Vertuous Man wants no Wealth, I deny not but that he needs a Competency; what this is, is the next thing to be enquired: for this pretext of Having what is enough, is frequently made use of to justifie and legitimate Avarice and Ambition.

See Sect. 2. Competency.

The measure of Competency is the Necessities of Nature, not the extravagancies of Fancy: A little Heap, where frugal Temperance and humble Industry are the Stewards, is a plentiful Provision; But wherever wastful Luxury and wanton Fancy rule and govern, Plenty it self is a meer Dearth: what Treasures would not the Expensive Riots of *Apicius*, *Orata*, *Clodius* exhaust? how small a Particle of which would have been ample Revenues to *Curius*, *Æmilius Pappus*, or *Fabricius*? Competency then is that Provision which the Vertuous Man needs as his *Viaticum*, as the Support of Life and Instrument of Vertue; the modest wish of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. *Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on*: The Use and Advantage of this, is not to keep us or our Children from being exposed to Contempt (that is too slight an Evil for a Christian or Philosopher to dread) but to the barbarous Pity or Charity of Rich and great Friends. A second Use or Advantage of it is, that it helps to keep the Mind erect and free; that it puts us into a Capacity of Employing our Reason, and enjoying our selves our own way; and leaves us not under
any

any Temptation to unmanly Compliances, or Unchristian Jealousies and Fears: for he whose Ambition goes not beyond this, will easily trust Providence, if he believe there be any; or his own Industry, if he believe none: how he that divides and separates Providence and Industry will thrive in this matter, I know not; but he that joyns his own Industry with God's Blessing obtain'd by Prayer, can never miss of this his aim. Having proceeded thus far, I shall be more easily able to resolve,

Thirdly, What the Value, what the Necessity of Riches is. 'Tis a pretty Speech which *Plato* in *Stobæus* makes in the Defence and Commendation of Wealth; but in the first place, I do not call every thing Wealth, that is not mere Beggary; I have allow'd of a Competency as very Convenient even for a Vertuous and Wise man; in the next place, I trouble not my self about the Grandeur or Security of Kingdoms, tho Peradventure the *Scythian Poverty*, or *Roman Vertue* is a stronger Bulwark, a better Guard of these than the Riches of *Asia*: And in the last place, I do not enquire

The Tendency of Wealth. with reference to the Soul. Serm. 89. ex Teletæ.

enquire, what use Wisdom and Vertue are able to make of Wealth, which can extract Pleasure and Happiness even out of Troubles and Afflictions, but what the Natural tendency of Wealth is; these things being observed, that and all other Discourses of the like Nature will appear to contain very little of solid Truth, and to have very little of weight in them: let us come to a tryal of the Matter. If Contentment and Security were the natural Effects of Wealth, if to be Rich and to be Happy were the same thing, then it were not to be wondred at, that Wealth should be the great Idol and Ambition of Mankind; but if it neither free Men from those Passions of the Mind, nor those Diseases of the Body, nor other Calamities which imbitter life to the inferiour part of Mankind; what then is the Advantage of it? Let us then stand still and consider this, do not Hatred and Anger, Envy and Anxiety, Ambition and Lust reign more frequently and more insolently in the Bosom of the great and wealthy, than of the labouring Cottager? Nay, I believe upon a narrow search we shall find that some Passions are the Prerogative
of

of a proud and insolent Fortune, and are not incident to a mean one, such as haughty Anger, irreconcilable Hatred, an unlimited Ambition, and an uneasy Wantonness: the Plowman and the Artist, the Labourer and the Hind know none of these; Ambition does not break their Sleep, nor a fastidious Niceness make 'em disgust and nauseate their best Meals; nor are they troubled with wild, and ungovernable Lusts, bred by Excess, and nurs'd by gaudy Bravery, deluding Arts and more deluding Fancy.

Nor are the Rich more exempt from the Diseases of the Body, than from the Passions of the Mind; excessive Meals, disorderly Sleeps, much Sloth and much Wantonness, as they are the Priviledges of a gay Fortune, so are they the sources of Innumerable Diseases: Scurvies, Gouts, Rheumatisms, Surfeits, Putrid Feavers, and I know not what are the Consequences of Proud Idleness, and Excessive Enjoyments, *i. e.* of ill govern'd Wealth: whereas a plain Table and a sober Life, Regular and Cheap Pleasures and moderate Labour beget and improve an entire Habit of Health, and

With reference to the Body.

pro-

prolong life to the utmost Period of Nature : This is a second great Advantage of Wealth, that it gives us a diseased Body, and a short Life.

*With reference to
Mans outward
state.*

Sure then, the Rich are the Minions of Fortune, and the Disasters which oppress the rest of Mankind touch not them : On the quite contrary, all Animals are stuffed with the Calamities and Misfortunes of these Men, rifled Wealth, defeated Hopes, baffled Ambition, blasted Honours, broken dejected Power, and in a word mighty Changes are the Argument of Tragedies, and the Subject of a loud and raving Passion : whereas the Strokes of Fortune are soft and gentle, when they light upon the mean, these are not capable of Tragical Alterations ; their Minds are of a stronger Temper, their Bodies firmer, their Senses not nice and delicate, and their little Sufferings draw not after 'em the mournful Pomp and State which attends the Fall, I may call it, the Funeral of a great one : Here Envy insults not, Malice traduces not, the petulant Multitude do not follow the Corps with confus'd Clamours and Censures : Nor do Acquaintance flock to express outwardly

wardly a Cold and formal Regard, while they feel inwardly a secret Joy, for that Man's Fall is always unpitied whose Power was a barren and useleſs Title: But to come cloſer yet, what is it that makes up the Comfort of Humane Life? a quiet State, faithful Friends, good Wives & good Children? if we conſider it, we ſhall find the Life of Man little beholden to Wealth in theſe Points: in all Changes of time, are not the Rich the greateſt Sufferers? the mark of Envy, the prey of Violence and Uſurpation? have they not more Enemies as well as more Friends than other Men? Friends did I ſay, they have None. They have Dependents, Flatterers, Companions and Miniſters of their Pleaſures, no Friends. Hence is it, that nothing is more Common, than for thoſe above us to wiſh for the Content, the Eaſe, and Enjoyment of thoſe below 'em: for the truth of it is, (if we proceed) Relations which are the pleaſure of Men of Middle Fortune, are the burden and Incumbrance of the Rich and Great: for in all their Contracts and Diſpoſals, they are Servants to their Fortune, not their Inclination, Marriages amongſt theſe are the Match-

es of Estates not Minds; and therefore they attend not the Temper or the Honor of the Families they link with; nay, what is worse, they have no regard to their Education, or Vertue, or Wisdom: But Money weighs all down, whatever Objections are put in the opposite Scale; in the whole Method of their Lives, they are Slaves to their Fortune, and to their Reputation in the World, judging themselves obliged to live not according to their Reason, but their Quality and the Humour, that is, the Folly of the Age, and of the Acquaintance they converse with: Nor dare they walk by any other Maxims, in the Government of the nearest to them, or in the Education of their Children, in all these things they must do what becomes Men of their figure in the World, not what becomes true Wisdom. Who sees not now that upon the whole, there is in this State or Condition of life more incumbrance and less true freedom: more of shew, and less of Enjoyment than in any other?

*The Admi-
ration of
Wealth,
whence.*

If all this be true, you'll be apt to conclude Mankind is Mad, if Wealth neither makes us more Wise, nor more healthy,

healthy, more free in our selves, nor more fortunate in our Relations, what bewitches Men into this Extravagant Dotage? what makes the World gaze upon and envy the Rich, as the only Happy Creatures? what makes us fawn upon 'em and flatter 'em, as the only Powerful and great things the World has? Something there is in it, and that's this, we see the outside, the Pomp and Pageantry of Wealth: we see the gilt Coaches, the rich Liveries, the little Town of Buildings, gay Furniture, and a whole Squadron of Dishes; and together with all this, the gaudy Trappings the Happy Man's bedight with; the Port, the Grace, the Confidence that all this gives to Ignorance and Nonsense: But if you'll consider this truly, you will find all this mere Pageantry and Apparition, nothing solid nor real in it. As for gay Cloathing; 'tis an Advantage not worth the speaking to, 'tis the Pride of Children and the weakest of Women, the little Soul that converses no higher than the Looking-glass and a Phantastick Dress may help to make up the shew of the World, but must not be reckon'd among the
rational

rational Inhabitants of it; serving only as Painture, Images, and Ornaments to the Stage, not Actors on it: as to all the Rest, they *seem* to enjoy some Preheminence, but do not; the mean Man eats his Morsel with more Pleasure, because more appetite; and sleeps with more delight, because with more ease, neither oppress'd in Body by Luxury, nor in Mind by Care; *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; but the Abundance of the Rich will not suffer him to sleep.* All the rest, as numerous Attendants, many Dependents, Flocks of Parasites, and the like, are but mere incumbrance, the unwieldiness of a gross and heavy Body: all these serve to increase the Noise and Hurry, the Care and the Pomp, but not the Pleasure or Enjoyment of the Wealthy. Hence was that Observation of Solomon, *If Riches increase, they are increas'd that eat them, and what profit has the owner thereof, saving the beholding of it with his Eyes?* a most Extraordinary Happiness, this, to be the Host of the Neighbourhood, to have one's House the Rendezvous of the Idle & the Gluttonous, of Buffoons and Flatterers, and

Ecclef. 5.
12.

Ibid.

and yet if the Rich live otherwise, presently they grow infamous and stink, they are look'd upon as *Indian Graves*, where Wealth is not laid up, but lost and buried: they are loaded with the Curses of some, with the Hatred of others, and with the Censures of all; and this is almost as bad as to be pester'd with Impertinencies and Flattery; This is the whole of the matter, if People gaze and admire, 'tis their Ignorance: if they fawn or flatter, 'tis their Baseness; but still remember, 'tis the People, 'tis the Croud that doth this: should a Man of Letters or of Spirit, be overawed by the Laws of Custom or some unhappy Necessity into the Commission of this Idolatry, he could not but despise the Idol he bow'd down to, and see it a mere lump of Wood or Stone, notwithstanding its gaudy dresses; tho I acknowledge, I comprehend not, what can reduce a Philosopher to this piece of shameful Dissimulation; the Soul that is great in it self is so in despite of Fortune: he that can live virtuously, can live Happily in the lowest State: he that desires but little, has no need of much: he that can despise Rich-

M

es,

es, can despise the Insolence and Pride of the Rich: in one word, he that can Command himself, needs be a slave to none.

After all, I think it were possible to evince the mischievousness of Wealth as plainly, as I have it's usefessness; but that were to press the point further than my present Design requires: for my Business was to shew, either that Fortune was not necessary to our Happiness, or as far as it is, that 'tis in our own Power, both which I may now presume my self to have sufficiently perform'd. I will therefore pass on to

CHAP. V.

Of F A T E.

The Notion of Fate stated. Man's fondness: Fate from spiritual Pride and Looseness. Fate impugned, 1. By Authority: Various Opinions about it and its Causes. The extent of it's Empire. The Mind exempt. The true difference between the Pythagorean and Stoick Fate — Different Opinions about the
Ne-

Necessity implied in Fate—— Christian Fate worse than Pagan. 2. By Reason and Revelation. Fate cannot derive it self from Matter, nor from God: 'Tis repugnant to Sense and Experience. The consequences of Fate. Scripture clear'd from countenancing Fate. Demonstrated from the Nature of God, his declar'd Will and Government.

Objection from Fate. Amongst the many Shifts and Devices Men have invented to quiet Conscience, and at once to excuse and enjoy their Lusts, this is none of the least that they impute all to Fate, not only the Events that befall them, but, even their Crimes and Follies, as *Juvenal* did the Dissoluteness of *Peribomius*; that is, they believe or would be thought to do so, that all our Affections and Actions, and all Events that befall us are fatal and inevitable; That no Prudence can prevent, no Industry frustrate the Decrees of Fate, against which we struggle but in Vain. This is the popular and general Notion of Fate taught first by *Democritus*, *Empedocles*, *Heraclitus* and *Leucippus*, and so derived down from Age

The Notion of Fate stated.

to Age, and prevailing mostly amongst the Multitude. Thus *Bacchylides* in *Stobæus* his *Eclogue* expresses the popular Notion of Fate, 'Tis

Θνητοῖς ἐκ ἀνδραίρετος ἔτ'
ὄλεον τ' ἔτ' ἀχαμπιστ' Ἄρης,
ἔτε πάνφερος εἰσὶς· ἀλλ' ἐπι-
χείμπει νέρθε· ἄλλοτε ἔπ'
ἄλλαν γὰν αἰ πάνδωρθε δῖσα.
Stob. Ec. Phys. c. 9.

not in Man to choose his state, whether wealthy Peace or Inexorable War, or all-confounding Sedition; but Fate the Sovereign Arbitrer of Each,

leads us on blind and hood-wink'd to our Ruine. And *Euripides* expresses the other part of the opinion containing the Adamantine Chain, the insuperable Necessity of Fate thus, μόρσιμα δ' ἔτε φυγεῖν δέμης; ἔτε σοφία ἢ ἀπόσσειαι, ἀλλὰ μάταιον πρῆδυσθαι αἰὲν πόνον ἔξει. 'Tis not permitted us to shun our Destiny, nor can any Humane Prudence ward its blows, nor can any thing but endless and fruitless troubles attend our Contention with it.

'Tis a sign of a Desperate Cause or Desperate Impudence to dispute against our Common sense, and to defie the daily Experience of Mankind; and yet all this, the Abettors of an Universal Fate (such as this is) are guilty of; for they deny that Liberty in Man which all Laws Divine and Humane, all Exhorta-

hortations and Advices, all Commendation and Reproof, *i. e.* plainly God and Man do suppose, for if the Mind of Man were o're-rul'd, if his present and future State were fix'd and determin'd by a Fatal and Inexorable Necessity; then as Laws, Advice and Exhortation would be useless and impertinent, so all Reproof and Punishment would be unjust, and all Praise and Reward undeserved: and yet tho the Assertion of Fate be oppress'd and ore-born by all these Absurdities, it wants not at this Day its maintainers and sticklers; For there are who maintain a Necessity in humane Affairs, and Events deriv'd from the Influence of Heavenly Bodies: which notion of Fate taken in the words of *Manilius*.

Fata regunt Orbem, certa stant omnia *Manilius*
Astronomi-
con. 4.
Lege,

Longaq; per certos signantur tempora Cursus.
Nascentes morimur, Finisque ab Origine
pendet.

Fates rule the World, fix'd Laws do all
things guide,
And long Times through their certain
Channels slide.

Death of the Birth, of the Beginning the
End,
And all the Events of Humane life de-
pend.

And there are others, who tho they condemn Judicial Astrology in set Treatises writ against it, do yet maintain such Eternal Decrees as imply a more inflexible Fate than any Pagan but *Democritus*, and those just now mention'd with him, did ever hold; Nay, a Fate more impious than that of *Democritus*, for what he imputed to senseless matter, these do to God; and as much more rigid as it is more impious than his, for he never thought of another life wherein Eternal Misery should punish those Actions that were unavoidable in this.

*Man's fond-
ness for
fate, whence*

Now the Reason why this Doctrine of Fate, this absurd and baffled Doctrine is so greedily embrac'd and eagerly defended by many, is very plain; it feeds the Vanity and Curiosity of some, and the Pride of others, 'tis a luscious pleasure to curious and vain Minds to fancy themselves Masters of the starry *Cabala*, able to spell out and interpret the Laws of Fate, and pry into the Destinies of
future

future Ages, which are cover'd with thick Clouds and impenetrable Darkneſs to all but them alone: 'tis a delicious pleaſure, no doubt of it, to the Proud and haughty, and ill-natur'd, to ſee themſelves careſs'd and exalted by God as his particular Favourites, while the miſerable Multitude, the reſt of Mankind, are excluded from the Capacity, and, much more, the Hopes of Happineſs and Heaven: and in general 'tis an acceptable opinion to the looſe and profligate, ſince 'tis a ready Apology for Idleneſs and Luſt, and all manner of Sins: for Men might Sin confidently and without remorse, if they did Sin fatally; or rather nothing could be branded with the Infamy of Sin and Shame, when whatever Men did, were the Effect, the unavoidable Effect of Nature and Neceſſity, an Act of Obedience to thoſe Fatal Laws which they cou'd not tranſgreſs. *Tertullian* therefore ſpeaks very properly when he ſaith, *Mentis malæ impetus vel Fato vel Aſtris imputant, nolunt ſuum eſſe quod malum agnoſcunt: They impute the Heat and Sallies of their Luſt to Stars and Fate, being unwilling to charge themſelves with the*

guilt of that which they own to be Evil.

*Donec Cerealis mulceret animos,
Fato acta dictitans quæ militum
Ducumque Discordia, vel fraude
Hostium evenissent. Tacit. l. 4. Hist.*

This is the use *Cerealis* makes of this Doctrine of Fate in *Tacitus*, The Roman Legions had be-

hav'd themselves very unworthy of that Name and Reputation they possess'd, and were extreemly dejected under the Conscience of it; therefore he to cheer and encourage 'em, and to wipe off the stain and dishonour of their Misdemeanour, imputed to Fate, that which ought with truth to have been imputed to the Dissention of their Leaders and themselves, and to the Fraud and Cunning of their Enemies. From this little that has been said, as it appears why Proud and vicious Men contend for Fate; so does it likewise of what importance it is, to free Men's Minds from a perswasion so pernicious to the Interest of Vertue, the Peace of the Publick, the Happiness of Man, and the Honour of God. To which purpose that I may contribute all I can, I'll consider, *First*, On which side stands the Advantage of Authority, whether for or against Fate.

1. *Secondly*, what plain Reason and as plain Revelation do dictate in this Point.

As

As to the first, I will not pretend to make a just and intelligible Collection of the Different Notions which have been taken up of Fate, 'tis evident from that which *Grotius* has done of this kind, not only how tedious and voluminous, but also how obscure and confus'd the Discourses of Men have been on this Subject; I shall only therefore as far as my Memory will serve me, consider their Opinions in such a manner as the Nature of this present Enquiry shall oblige me. Most Philosophers do agree in one general Notion of Fate, that it is a Connexion or Series of Causes successively depending upon one another, and producing a necessary Effect or Event, εἰρηδὲς αἰπῶν ἀπαρχαίῃ; But their

*Variety of
opinions
concerning
Fate and
its Cause.*

Nemesis.

two only things into which all Philosophers have ultimately resolved their Search and Enquiries after the Original of all things, they ought to have look'd for no other Original of Fate than one of these two : but this concerns my present Question but very little, for if Man be over-ruled and determined by Fatal Laws, it matters little how he came to be so : Nor did I mention this variety of Opinions for any other Reason than this, that it gives us just Occasion to suspect Fate it self as an Erroneous and ill-grounded Position ; for obscurity and intricacy and multiplicity of different Notions about the same thing are the general Marks of Falshood and Error : but there are two things very material to be enquired. *First*, How far the Empire or Dominion of Fate was generally extended: And *Secondly*, what kind of Necessity, or what degrees of it were generally supposed to constitute Fate.

1. *The Extent of it's Empire.*

As to the Extent of its Power, this one thing is very remarkable, that the Heathens did exempt the *Mind* of Man from its Sovereignty. *Democritus* indeed believed the Soul of Man as *Necessarily* and *Fatally* moved by the Impression of his

his Atoms as any other Natural or Irrational Body : but *Epicurus* deserted him in this, and following the Conduct of common Sense and Experience, acknowledged the Liberty of the Soul of Man, and laboured (as *Plutarch* tells us) with all his might to assert it, and to preserve the Distinction of Vertue and Vice, which Fate destroys ; to serve this *Hypothesis*, it was that he invented that new motion of his Atoms, called by *Lucretius* *Clinamen* , sufficiently exposed by *Tully* , and how well defended by *Gassendus* , I am not concerned to Examine ; for I have produced his Opinion only as an Instance of the clearness of this Truth, That the Soul of Man is not subject to Fate, for had not it's *Liberty* been undeniable and self-evident, the Principles of *Epicurus* his Philosophy had certainly obliged him to follow *Democritus* in this, as in all other Points, and to have believed the Soul it self o're-ru'd By Fate. The Poets indeed made the Monarchy of Fate so Universal, that they believed the Gods themselves subject to it. Thus *Jupiter* in *Homer* bemoans the Fate of his *Sarpedon*, which he could not prevent ; And thus another
Poet

Poet represents *Apollo* striving in vain by all the Power of Art, and Vertue of Herbs to restore life to his *Hyacinthus*. Nor was this only a Poetick Fancy, 'tis usual with *Plato* to extend the Dominion of Fate over the Gods themselves; but this was no wonder, for Fate with him imports the immutable Laws of the Supreme God, and God's those Spirits that were created by him. The *Stoicks* indeed (at least some of them) assigned a worse Reason for this Sovereignty of Fate, namely, That the Supreme Architect could not Correct the Defects and Incapacities of *Matter*. After all this, 'tis no wonder that St. *Austin* should take this to be the general Notion of Fatal Events, that they were such as proceeded from the Necessity of I know not what Order, maugre God and Man: But all this while, it must be remembered that this Dominion of Fate, tho it limited the Power, did not over-awe or necessitate the *Will* of their Gods. And no wonder, for I never find, as I remarked before, that any but *Democritus* and his Tribe, did extend the Dominion of Fate over the Soul of Man: *Hierocles* makes the *Pythagorean* Fate nothing else but

De Civ. Dei
l. 5. c. 1.

but the Execution of that immutable Divine Decree, That the *Vertuous* should be rewarded, and the *Vicious* punished, and at the same time doth utterly deny that Man is any way necessitated or over-ruled in his Choice or Actions. *Al-*

cinous representing the Platonick Fate, determines indeed the Events of things fatal, but at the same time, he leaves the Minds of Men possessed of their just and natural Liberty. And whatever unavoidable Connexion of Causes the *Stoick* talked of, no one did more exalt and magnifie the Liberty and Power of the Mind of Man, So

that *Nemefius* might very well in general affirm, That the wisest of the *Greeks* believed Mens Minds free, and

the Events of their Actions Fatal, whether he had respect to the former or the latter. Thus far then, the *Pythagorean*, *Platonick*, and *Stoick* agreed, That the Mind of Man was free, That Events were Fatal: Now 'tis not to be wondred at, that they who did not judge the Calamitous or Prosperous Issues of outward things to deserve the Name of Good or Evil,

De Decret.
Platonici,
c. 19.

* Οἱ δὲ λέγοντες ὅτι αἴρουν τῶν
πράξεων ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι. ὅτι δὲ τῶν
αἰρετέων ἀπόβασιν ἐπὶ τῇ εἰμαρ-
μένῃ, εἰσι δὲ τῶν Ἑλλήνων σοφώ-
τατοι, Nemef. c. 37.

Evil, should place such Events wholly out of our own Power, and deem 'em no way dependent upon our Behaviour: 'tis enough that they left Man's true Happiness, *i. e.* Wisdom and Vertue in his own Power, which they always did.

Marcus An.
ton's l. 2.

Ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴσι (scil. Θεοὶ) καὶ μέλει ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἀνθρωπείων, καὶ τοῖς μὲν κατ' ἀλύθειαν κακοῖς, ἵνα μὴ πεπλήρη ὁ Ἄνθρωπος, ἐπ' αὐτῶν τὸ πᾶν ἔδειξο. And it deserves here to be remembred that they confin'd this Fatality of Events to this life, for such of them as did believe the Eternal Duration or Immortality of the Soul, did also believe that its Misery or Happiness in that State, did depend on its Behaviour in this. But how came the *Platonicks* and *Pythagoreans*, who set that Value upon Temporal things which they deserved, to agree thus far with the *Stoicks* in asserting the Fatality of Events? or how came the storm and fury of all Writers to light so heavily only upon the *Stoicks* Fate, if these taught the same thing with *Pythagoras* and *Plato*? they did indeed all of 'em acknowledge Events Fatal, and yet they differ'd widely in their Notion of this Fatality; for *first* the *Stoick* Fate depended partly upon *Matter*, partly upon

upon God, whereas the *Platonick* Fate depended wholly upon the Will of a Wise, Powerful and good God. *Secondly*, The *Pythagorean* and *Platonick* did believe Good and Evil to be dispensed by a Divine and immutable Law, but so, that the one should be the Reward of Vertue, and the other the Punishment of Vice: So that Fate with them was nothing else but the Execution of that Decree of God in the Prophet, *Say ye to the Righteous it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the Wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the Reward of his hands shall be given him.* But the *Stoicks* in their Assertion of the Fatality of Events had no such Regard to the Vertue or Vice of Man; nor did they settle or suppose any such Necessary Connexion or Dependence between Vice and Vertue of Man on the one hand, and Punishment and Reward on the other. *Thirdly*, tho the *Platonicks* taught that all things were comprehended within the Compass of Fate, that is the general and immutable Laws of the Supreme Being, yet did they not believe that all particulars were decreed and determin'd; whereas the *Stoicks*

Isaiah 3.

icks (if we follow the Common Opinion) did not exempt any particular Event from the Over-ruling Necessity of Fate.

*Quicquid patitur mortale genus,
Quicquid facimus venit ex alto;*

*Whatever ill unhappy Man sustains,
Whate're he doth, tis what his Fate ordains.*

And lastly, The necessity of the *Stoick* Fate was Rigid and Inflexible, but that of the *Platonick* was not, or at least not in all Cases. And this puts me in Mind of the

The necessity, in Fate of what sort.

Second thing Considerable in the Notion of Fate, *i. e.* what kind of Necessity or what degrees of it are supposed to render an Event Fatal? The *Stoicks* did indeed think that the Necessity of Fate was uncontrollable, irresistible, inevitable; tho I cannot deny but that the Opinion of *Chrysippus* and *Seneca* too (as he explains it somewhere in his Natural Questions) concerning Fate, if placed in an advantageous Light would look with a more pleasing and favourable Aspect upon the Liberty of Man; but let the

Stoicks

Stoicks think what they will, I do not find that others thought such a Necessity as this alone, and nothing less sufficient to make up Fate; for the *Egyptians* which supposed an Astrological Fate, or o're-ruling Influence of the Stars, did yet believe that the Evil they threatned might be diverted by Prayers, Sacrifices and other Religious Rites, according to that

of *Nemesius*, There are no Influences, no Aspects of Stars so froward and malignant, so fatal and irresistible, but that Prayers and Expiations may sweeten and mitigate them, or else prevail with those Powers which govern them to divert their Menaces. Besides this, the Distinction of

Περὶ ὃ τὰς σφύρας ἢ Αἰγυπτίων λέγονται ἀληθεύει μὲν καὶ διὰ ἢ ἀστρῶν ἐμαρμένην, τρέπει δὲ αὐτὴν εὐχαῖς καὶ ἀποτερασμοῖς, εἶναι γὰρ πᾶς καὶ τέτων αὐτῶν ἢ ἀστέρων διεργασίας τὰς ἐμμελιωμένας αὐτὰς, καὶ ἄλλας πᾶς ὑπερκεκμημένας δυνάμεις, τὰς τρέπειν αὐτὰς δυνάμεις, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ τὰς διεργασίας ἢ Θεῶν καὶ τὰς ἀποτερασμοὺς ἐπιμερόμεναι.

Nemes. p. 226.

Fate into Denunciative and Peremptory or Conditional, was very well known to the Heathens; this Last was a Fate whose Necessity depended upon some Antecedent Conditions, upon some Suppositions which might or might not be fulfilled: This, *Servius* discourses largely of upon that place of *Virgil*:

N

Nam

*Nam quia nec Fato , merita nec morte peribat,
Sed misera ante Diem —*

*Before her Day fell the Unhappy Maid
By Love, not Fate, nor her own Crimes
betray'd:*

Where he that pleases may see many Instances of this Conditional Fate; and to come to an End, the Necessity of Fate in the opinion of *Aristotle* and *Epicurus*, if *Gassendus* represents it rightly, was not an inflexible, uncontrollable one, but one subject to Alteration and Change, to Chance and many Impediments, being nothing else but that Energy or Efficacy in Natural Bodies, which the Wisdom of Man did often prevent, the Industry and Courage of Man did often master, and Chance did often hinder and overrule. By all this we see plainly how careful the Heathens were, that the Necessity of Fate might not destroy the Liberty of Man, how earnestly they contended for such a Fatality of Events, as might not cancel Man's Obligation to Vertue, nor discourage him from the Expectation and Pursuit of Happiness;
for

for now to draw to a Point, and to make some use of this tedious Recital of the Pagan Notions of Fate : If we assert a *Stoical* Fate, we yet leave the Wise Man whatever Encouragements he can derive from the Rewards of another life, and whatever Satisfaction he can derive from Vertue it self in this. And certainly tho temporal Events were Fatal without any Connexion to, or Dependence upon the Choice and Actions of Man ; yet even on this Supposition , Vertue were eligible, as that which teaches us to enjoy Prosperity , and bear bravely that Adversity which we could not prevent : But if with other Philosophers we did believe, not only that the success of another life, but even that of this too, did depend wholly upon our behaviour, and that Events were therefore only Fatal, because those Decrees of God which did award Happiness to the Vertuous, and Misery to the Wicked, are fix'd and immutable ; then we could not desire more powerful Encouragements to Vertue, or more Evident proof that it is in our own Power to be Happy. If we grant the Necessity that makes up Fate flexible and mutable, or if we suspend a

Cæli. Rhodiginus,
l. x. c. 20.

fatal Event upon Conditions, as it were but reasonable to imagine that all Evil ones are suspended: there will be no Reason to question whether Man's Happiness be in his own Power. If we make the Necessity of a denunciative Fate, which even Wisdom and Vertue cannot surmount, extend it self to some few things: and that Fate or Fortune, which drags only Fools and Sluggards in Chains after it, more general and universal, which is a Notion *Cælius Rhodiginus* seems to have taken from the *Platonicks*; we meet with nothing in all this which can rationally deter the Industry and Hopes of any Man. If lastly, with *Aristotle* and *Epicurus*, we attribute no more force or strength to Fate, than to that Efficacy of Natural Causes, which we experience every Day is not irresistible (for the Mind over-comes those Inclinations we derive from Natural Temper, and Life may be lengthen'd or shortned by Temperance or Luxury, it being a flame which is not of it self so inextinguishable, but that it requires our Care to cherish it, and barren Grounds may be improved and cultivated, &c.) then nothing is more Evident than

than that it behoves us to act like Men, since our Reason and Vertue have their Necessary tendency and efficacy as well as any other natural Causes: and since the Concurrence of our Endeavours may so much more properly be supposed Necessary to promote our Happiness than the Influence of Stars, as it has a more direct and immediate operation upon our Affairs, than the Motion of those Heavenly Bodies can have.

And now who would expect to find that Fate in the Christian which was banished the Pagan World? who would expect that the Mind of Man should be fetter'd and bound by a more inexorable and deplorable Necessity now in this Age of *Light and Grace*, than ever it was in the thickest Darknes of Paganism? who could now believe that Man's Eternal success, in another life, should be as fatal as ever the *Stoick* did believe his Temporal one in this? or who could ever imagine that Christians would Charge that upon the Decrees of a Wise and Good God, which the Heathens out of their Honour for him, did ever refuse to do? for those of them who made Fate entirely the Decree of God, did believe

*Christian
Fate worse
than Pa-
gan.*

that in the Dispensation of Evils God did wholly regard Men's Crimes and Sins, that there was no other Fate attended any Man than what he was himself the Author of. And they who did believe a Fatality of Events without any dependence upon the Behaviour of Man, did impute it to *Matter*, not to God, to the *deficiency* of the one, not to the *Will* of the other. 'Tis true, such a Fate is not to be found in the Scriptures, as we shall see anon; nor is it to be found in the Fathers of the Church, we may find *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Lactantius*, and *St. Austin* himself, (however accus'd by some as a Fatalist) zealously Disputing against the Pagan Fate: what would they have done, had there been then such a Notion of Fate as has since prevail'd amongst some Christians, which is briefly this, That the Eternal misery of Nineteen Parts of the World, (I speak modestly) and the Eternal Happiness of the Twentieth, is Fatal; that the means conducing to these Ends are fatal: the one being shut up under the invincible Necessity of *Natural Impotence*, and *Rejection from sufficient Grace*: the other being called and acted by *Grace, Irresistible*.

fitible. That this Necessity of Fate is the Result of a Divine Decree, That this Decree proceeded from mere Arbitrary *Will*, without any regard to the Behaviour of Man, they that cried out against the Pagan Fate, that it subverted Humane life, that it defeated all Laws, that it left Man no use of his Reason, that it left no place for rational Hopes or Fears, with what bitter invectives must they needs have assaulted this Fate? the Pagan Fate left the *Will* free, this bound and fetter'd, not only bereaved of Natural Power and Liberty (for we contend not about that) but destitute of Grace and Divine Assistance? The Pagan Fate in the Opinion of a great many, if not most, did not teach a rigid and inflexible *Necessity*, this doth: they amongst the Pagans who taught the Necessity of Fate inexorable, understood it of *Necessity* in Temporal Events, but this Fate extends it to eternal ones. The *Stoick* the great Asserter of Fate acknowledged, nay, eagerly contended, that Man might be Vertuous and Happy in despite of Fate, but these Men make humane Happiness and Vertue the very Object of their Fate, making Sin and

Misery, Vertue and Happinefs, as Fatal as any Events whatever.

* Calvin.
brevis Re-
fponfio, &c.
in Prat.

In vain now fhall any one of 'em think to excufe their Doctrine from the Imputation of Fate, by telling us (as * fome do) that Fate in the Pagan Notion did involve God as well as Man within the Compafs of it's Neceffity: that what they teach, is nothing elfe but God's voluntary Decree: this is a miserable fhift, for this doth not at all lighten the weight of that Fatal Neceffity that lies upon unhappy Man, to think that God is not fubject to the fame: nay, on the quite contrary, the Pagan Notion was more eafie to the Mind, and whilft it freed God from the guilt of Man's Ruine, it frees Man from all hard and irreligious thoughts of God.

Mart.

*Numina cum videas diris obnoxia Fatis,
Invidia poffis exonerare Deos.*

*Since Heavenly Powers to Curs'd Fate
fubject be,
The Gods you cannot but from Envy free.*

It was pure Piety in the *Stoick*, to impute that Fatality of Event, which he thought independent of the good or ill-beha-

behaviour of Man, to any thing rather than to God, what Impiety! — But I have done, I have sufficiently considered which way the stream of Authority runs, and it evidently appears to be against all such Notions of Fate, as put it out of a Man's Power to be Vertuous and Happy, and determine his Sin and Misery wholly *Necessary* and unavoidable. I will now proceed to consider,

Secondly, What plain Reason and as plain Revelation do dictate in this point. Thou dost believe Fate, and therefore dost despair of Happiness; Thy sense must be plainly this, All is in the Power of Fate, nothing in thine own, there is nothing in thee to do that can contribute to make thee Vertuous or Happy: Whence can this *Necessity*, this Fate proceed? there are but two Principles that were ever fancied to be the first Causes of all things, *God* and *Matter*. Dost thou believe this Necessity proceeds from Matter, from the Motion of Atoms, or the Influence of Stars? This belief, as *St. Austin* argues, doth subvert the Foundation of all Religion, for he who believes that he depends upon Fate not God, can have

*Reason and
Revelation
against
Fate.*

no

no sufficient Reason for the Worship of that God, on whom he hath no Dependence; but this is that peradventure thou wouldst have; well, when thou art able to prove Reason and Understanding to derive themselves from senseless Atoms, when thou canst find out any kind of Natural Motion of Matter or Atoms, which can be the Cause of Liberty or Freedom in the *Will*, any Motion that can at once be Necessary (for so all Motion of Atoms must, be it of what kind it will) and yet free too, for such all my Deliberations and all my Choices I make, prove the Motion of the Mind to be, then I will acknowledge a Fate, not only independent from, but if thou wilt, Superiour to God; then I will forbear all farther attempts of Charity, as vain, and leave thee to thy Fate and Misery: But these are Notions so absurd in themselves, that no Similitudes, no Arguments, can make 'em appear one jot more ridiculous or irrational than they do to all Men of sense at the first hearing. There are some Errors as well as Truths that are self-evident, there needs no Demonstration to convince us that the one are Errors, and the other Truths,
and

and of this kind are the Errors we are speaking of; if a Man should assert that Death is the Original of Life, that senseless *Matter* gives Being to an understanding Mind, that Necessity is the Parent of Liberty and such like, it were an unpardonable weakness in any Man to think, that such assertion did stand in need of a laborious Confutation. But there are who suppose God the Author of all things, and yet suppose Events fatal too, the former Opinion was ridiculous, this is impious; for suppose Mankind fatally guided by the Influence of the Stars, and that these Stars have received this Power and Energy from God, is it not natural for every Man to break out into the words

of St. Austin, *How outrageously do these Men reproach Heaven whilst they believe those Crimes and Villanies decreed by that August Senate and glorious Court in Heaven, which had any City upon Earth decreed,*

it had deserved to have been damn'd by the Common Vote, and raz'd to the ground

by

Illi vero qui positionem Stellarum quodammodo decernentium qualis quisque sit, & quid ei proveniat boni quidve mali accidat, ex Dei voluntate suspendunt, si easdem stellas putant habere hanc potestatem traditam sibi à summa illius potestate, ut volentes ista decernant, magnam Cælo faciunt Injuriam: in cujus velut Clarissimo senatu ac Splendidissima Curia scelera facienda decerni, qualia si aliqua terrena Civitas decrevisset, genere humano decernente fuerat evertenda. Aug. de C. D. l. 5. c. 1.

by the united Arms of Mankind. When I consider that the Stars are the Work of God, that their Order and Motion was prescrib'd by him, that whatever Vigour and Efficacy they have, they have received it from him: and then Remember that God is a most infinitely kind & good Being; I should easily suffer my self to be persuaded that they could shed no influence upon this lower World, but what were extremely beneficial to it, that they could have no Aspects but what were favourable and benign: I could easily believe that all the Inclinations they form in the Body (if they form any) could be no other than Innocent and Vertuous; I can never believe that Lust or Falshood, Malice or Cruelty can come down from above; or that our Minds should be impregnated with Sin and Folly by the Influences of Heaven. No certainly, if there be any Vertue in the Stars that extends it self to man, it must rather be the seed of Life, and Health, and Vertue, than of Diseases, Death or Vice. I can easily fall in with the opinion of those Learned Men in *Cælius Rhodiginus*, who thought that that Vertue of Celestial Bodies, which tended of it self

Antiq. Lest.
l. x. c. 20.

to Excellent Ends, was marred and perverted by a vitious Education. And so the Gravity of *Saturn* did degenerate into Sullenness, Niggardliness and Melancholy. The Magnanimity of *Mars* into Rashness and Fool-hardiness. The Sharpness and Sagacity of *Mercury* into mischievous Craft and deceitful Subtilty. The Sweetness and Gentleness of *Venus* into filthy Lust, and so on: And this Thought does well become every one that pretends to any Religion, whether, Revealed or Natural: for this is Consonant to the excellency of the Divine Nature.

But this sort of Fate springing from the Influence of any Natural Bodies, is not only repugnant to Reason, but to our Sense and Experience: for nothing is more plain than this, that any such Influence cannot affect the Mind, but through the Body, and we do frequently find our Reason asserting its Power and Dominion against all the force and strength of the Body: Nor doth Reason only but in every Nation, Law and Custom triumph over the strongest Inclinations of Nature. As the Innocence of the *Seres*, the Chastity of those in *A-*
rabia

Fate repug-
nant to
sense and
experience.

rabia and *Osroene*, the Abstinence of the *Brachmans*, and numerous Instances which he that pleases may see in *Bardefanes* the *Syrian*, and others, does abundantly manifest, that their manners are the Effects not of the Influence of those planets that rule their Birth, but of those Laws and Customs that rule their Country. Since therefore that *Necessity* which our natural Tempers and Inclinations do impose upon the Mind, is the utmost Fate that we can imagine to proceed from the Influence of any Natural Bodies, 'tis Nonsense to suppose that Fate insuperable or incontrollable which we see baffled and defeated every day, and in every Nation.

The sum of those Reasons I have offer'd against Fate is this, If we make God the Author of it, we impiously Charge him with what is repugnant to his Nature; for a Good God cannot be the Cause of Man's Sin and Misery: if *Matter*, we ridiculously suppose, that what is it self senseless and inanimate should produce and govern a Being endow'd with *Life*, *Understanding* and *Liberty*: If the Stars, we run again into the same absurdities; for if they have their

their fatal Influence from God , then properly speaking, God is the Author, they but the Instrument of our Fate. If from themselves, then our Dependence on, and Worship of God is vain, and besides we absurdly subject the Reason and the Liberty of the Mind of Man to the senseless Tyranny of Atoms. If from the Consideration of the Causes of Fate we descend to examine what our Experience teaches us, what common sense informs us, each of 'em bears witness to the Sovereignty and Liberty of the Mind of Man.

If we should come in the last place to Examine what would be the Consequences of a Fatal *Necessity* over-ruling Man and Humane Affairs , they are such as are not only grossly Contradictious in themselves, but Fatal and Destructive both to the publick and private Good of Mankind. 'Tis true, were the Liberty of doing Evil taken from Man, we should have no Reason to complain, for then there would be nothing wanting to make the state of Man Happy as that of Angels, but Immortality: But to bereave Man of all Power to do good, to necessitate and compel him to be wicked, how

The consequences of Fate.

how dreadful are the Effects which must follow this? he that Stains his hands in the Blood of his Sovereign or his Parent, will accuse his Stars not himself; he that pollutes himself in the incestuous Embraces of a Mother or a Daughter may defend his Action as his Fate not Choice; and how readily shall we do all that Rage or Lust invites us to, when there is an Excuse prepared for all we do; for he is no more blameable who commits the Evil which he could not help, than he is worthy of Praise who did the Good which he could not forbear. Were it true, that whatever mischief Man did he were necessitated to do, we might with more Justice arraign the Stars and Atoms, than Malefactors; and all the Instruments of Mischief would be every jot as Guilty and Criminal, as the Man that us'd them. Were this true we might as properly betake our selves to *Magick* and *Inchantments*, as to *Advices* and *Exhortations*, when we would reclaim the vicious; nor yet could the one be more Effectual than the other; for what could alter what is unalterable? and for the same Reason, we might forbear our Sacrifices and Prayers, since what

what will be , must be , and cannot be otherwise.

Desine Fata Deum flecti sperare precando.

*You strive in vain with Prayers to move
The inexorable Fates above.*

Repentance and Tears may be what *Seneca* calls Expiation on this Supposition, *Ægræ mentis solatia, The deluding Dreams of a superstitious Mind* ; but could never procure us any real Advantage ; so that on this Supposition, what is now thought the only Wisdom, would be then the only Folly of a Sinner. *Repentance.* I think I may conclude here, for if it be not by this time Evident, whether Reason be for or against Fate, we may justly despair of discovering what Reason dictates in this or any other Question. I will now proceed to Examine,

What plain Text of Scripture speaks in this Point. And here in the first place we are to expect no other Fate than what depends upon God, for the Scripture makes all things derive their Original from him, and all things depend

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Scripture against Fate.

pend upon him, there is but one Creator, and one Lord, and therefore the Creature can be subject to no Laws but such as he Enacts; so that whatever Fate we now lye under, must be imputed to the voluntary Decree of God. Is then the Eternal Ruine of Man Fatal and unavoidable? If we enquire into the Original of this Unhappy Necessity, it must be ultimately resolved into the Divine Will; when God then decreed the inevitable Ruine of Man, under what Notion did he consider his Ruine? under that of *Misery*? or that of *Punishment*? If under the Notion of Punishment, this implies plainly, that we are to thank our selves for our Ruine: for Punishment is nothing else but the Infliction of that Misery which our Sin and Folly have deserved. But if under the Notion of Misery, how can this consist with the Infinite Goodness or Wisdom of God? Alas! how contradictory is this to Scripture? there God swears that he delights not in the Death of a *Sinner*; This Decree would suppose him to delight in the Death of the *Innocent*: there he is represented *full of Compassion*, and *slow to wrath*, even upon repeated Provocations, this

this Decree represents him so addicted to Wrath and Cruelty, that he made a World on purpose to have whereon to exercise it, and doth exercise it meerly for the delight he takes in it; The Scripture finally represents him full of Divine love for Mankind, and not only not desirous that they should perish, but extreemly desirous that they should be partakers of Everlasting life; this Decree supposes him so utter an Enemy to, and hater of Mankind, that he made the far greater part to no other End, but only to make 'em miserable. Let any unprejudiced Man judge now, whether this be not as Contradictory to Scripture as it is to Sense: Nor is it possible that any unprejudiced Man should look into Holy Writ and not discern evidently that Man's Ruine is the Effect of Sin, not only wilfully and presumptuously committed, but also obstinately and impenitently persisted in: and that God is so far from being fond of our Sufferings and Calamities, that he is ever and anon bewailing the Disappointment of his Love, the defeat of his Grace and Mercy by our Obstinacy and Impenitence: it is the voice of his Son, 'tis the voice of God.

Math. 23.

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often would I have gather'd thy Children together, even as a Hen gathers her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not! If therefore we desire to know what the Will of God is, with respect to Man, this is a full and plain Declaration of it; there can be no other, much less any Contradictory to this, if I may not confidently rely upon this Declaration of the Divine Will, there is no reveal'd Truth that I can depend upon; Nor can Revelation stand us in any stead, for nothing can be asserted with greater perspicuity or stronger Asseveration. But I have no scruples in me about this Matter, I have no Fears nor Jealousies of any secret Decree or latent Will repugnant to his declar'd one; I am as sure that God is *Good* and *True*, as that he is *Eternal* or *Almighty*: and were he not, we could reap but very little Comfort from all his other Attributes, how great or glorious soever in themselves. But blessed be God, if from examining those Declarations of his Will, which God has made us, we proceed to examine the Manner and Method of his*

his Government as it relates to Mankind (which is another and the only way left us to judge of his Will and Decrees) we shall find no Instance in the whole Series of Divine Dispensations, which can create in us the least Suspicion of lying under an Arbitrary and Tyrannical Fate: nay, if we consider the Acts of Divine Providence, we shall find the quite Contrary, that God so governs the World, that the Issues of things are not fatal and unavoidable, but dependent upon our selves, that God is free, Man free, and the Events of things free from any inevitable Necessity; God indeed is ever bound to do what is best, what is wisest, and can do no otherwise; This is the only Fate that God is subject to; But a possibility of Different Events is no way repugnant to his Wisdom, Justice or Goodness. In a proper sense therefore there is no Fate above him, that can impose a Necessity upon him, nor does he impose any upon himself: if there were in any part of his Government, a fatal and a peremptory Necessity, we should certainly find the tracks and footsteps of it amongst inanimate and sensitive Beings: how great a Liberty does

Jofh. x.

God make use of in this part of his Government; The Sun, whose Course seems certain and invariable as the Imaginary Laws of Fate, shall, if need be, stand stock still, or what is more, move backwards towards it's East. An instance of both we read of in Scripture, when God thought fit to execute his

2 Kings 20.

Judgments upon the *Amorites*: and condescended to give *Hezekiah* a miraculous Assurance of his Mercy: The fire shall not exert it's natural Heat, but shall cease to burn and consume, and

Dan. 3.

when he sees fit (as in the case of the three Children) become as harmless as the morning light: The Waters shall cease to flow as did the Red Sea, when the Army of *Israel* march'd through it, and saw with horror and delight, the rowling Waves stand fix'd and unmov'd as the Rocks and Shores that bounded them; and yet what Necessity, what

ate can we conceive more immutable, whatever Connexion of Natural Causes it be produc'd by, than that which makes the Sun move, the Fire burn, the Water flow? If we consider his Government of Kingdoms, where if any where the Periods and Revolutions of Misery and

Prof.

Prosperity should seem fatal and immutable ; here again we shall find the footsteps of unquestionable Liberty ; Let us for Instance consider God's Government of the Jews, what are the Laws which God obliges himself to observe towards them ;- *If ye walk in my Statutes, and keep my Commandments and do them ; then I will give you rain in due Season, and the Land shall yield her increase ; and the trees of the field shall yield their Fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the Vintage, and the Vintage shall reach unto the sowing time : and ye shall eat your bread to the full , and dwell in your Land safely &c. But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these Commandments. And if ye shall despise my Statutes, or if your Soul abhor my Judgments, so that you will not do all my Commandments, but that ye break my Covenant. I also will do this unto you ; I will even appoint over you Terrour, Consumption, and the burning Ague that shall consume the Eyes and cause sorrow of Heart : and ye shall sow your seed in vain , for your Enemies shall eat it , &c. Doth not God here lay Life and Death, Good*

Lev. 26.
3, 4, &c.

And 14, 15,
16, &c.

and Evil before them? is not the one and the other to be the Effect of their own Choice, their own behaviour? are we not reasonably to suppose the *Israelites* at the time of entring into that Covenant, whereof these are the Sanctions, as capable of Happiness, as they were of Misery? what was finally the Issue of things? the *Jews* rebelled and revolted from God, and as he threatned, they were harrassed and exhausted by continual Plagues and Punishments. Well, did this happen so, because it could not happen otherwise? was this the Event, the fatal Event of things which God did really *Will*, and immutably and peremptorily resolve from the beginning, notwithstanding whatever Professions he might make of his sincere desire of the welfare and prosperity of that People? Let God himself be the Judge, who best understands his own Mind. *O that my People had hearken'd to me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their Enemies, and turn'd my hand against their Adversaries: the haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him, but their time should have endured for ever.* By this, sure, if we can judge

Pfal. 81.

judge of the meaning of God by any of his Expressions, we may safely conclude, not only that the Obedience and Prosperity of *Israel* were things possible, and consequently their Disobedience and Ruine was not fatal; but also that their obedience and prosperity were the things which God did most heartily and sincerely desire. If we come to God's Government of particular Men, we may be sure that this is of a piece with his Government of Mankind or Kingdoms, it being nothing else but a more particular Application of those Universal Laws of Wisdom, Goodness, and Justice by which he Rules: An Instance of Liberty in Temporal Events, we meet with in that Voyage which St. *Luke* describes *Acts* 27. *Acts* 27. Verse the Tenth, we have St. *Paul* foretelling the Fate that was like to attend themselves and their Ship, if they pursued the Voyage they had resolved on: Verse 19. we meet with the Accomplishment in part, of his Prediction, Darkness and Horror invades 'em, Seas break in upon 'em, and at the same breach had Death entred, had not Divine Providence interposed in favour, and at the Request of St. *Paul*. Was this their Suffering

ing fatal? was it unavoidable? had they not escaped the Tempest, if they had believed *St. Paul*, and not departed from *Crete*? or was their obstinacy or unbelief as fatal as the Danger and Damage which attended it? The Expostulation of *St. Paul*, *Ver. 21.* will easily clear this Doubt, *Te should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.* What then! Shall we think the Issues of Eternity fatal when those of time wherein we are comparatively so little concern'd are free? Shall God not only leave us the use of our Reason, but also assist us by the Aid of his Providence for the avoiding temporal Evils, and will he allow us neither for the avoiding of Eternal ones? must temporal Ruine be the Effect only of our sinful Choice and Obstinacy, Eternal Ruine the Effect not of our Folly or Sin, but *Fate*? No surely, how often do we find God in the *Revelation* respiting his final Sentence, and giving Men space and time to repent? but they repented not: 'tis true, and this was their Obstinacy, not their Fate; for if Repentance had been impossible, to what purpose did God allow 'em time
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for it? that they might fill up the Measure of their Iniquity: an excellent Paraphrase! whom shall I believe? God saith, he gave the *Sinner* time to *Repent*; thou say'st he gave him time to *Sin*: God says, he gave him time to make himself capable of Mercy; thou say'st, he gave him time only to increase his Guilt and Punishment: How cruel are the Mercies of some Men! this is just such a Grace or Favour as griping Usurers vouchsafe the careless Debtor, whose Fortune and Estate they would swallow up and devour.

I have now I hope dispersed those Clouds which seemed to hover over our heads big with Storm and Ruine; I mean those melancholy Imaginations which scare and terrifie the weak and superstitious Minds of Men: we may now boldly pursue, and possess our selves of Happiness: the way to it is open, there is no cruel Deity, no spiteful Fortune, no inexorable Fate that will oppose us; there is no God but one of Love and Goodness, which moderate his Almighty Power, and temper the Severity of his Justice; a God who passionately desires

Pfal. 16.

desires our Happiness, and delights in nothing more than in promoting it; All is lightsom and chearful where he is, Perfection and Happiness dwell with him, *in his presence is fulness of Joy, and at his right hand are Pleasures for evermore.* He scatters and dissipates Evil and Troubles by the Light of his Countenance, Death and Hell fly far from before him, and hide themselves in their own Darkness. What can we apprehend from such a God as this is! how can he delight in our Misery who is all *Love*! No, nothing but our guilt or folly can raise our Fears, we may rest secure of his Favour, if we do not despise it; nor can he ever be made our Enemy unless we first become the Enemies of Vertue and Goodness: what then have we to fear? there is no Fate but the immutable Law of God, that Universal Law which adjudges Happiness to the Righteous, and Misery to the Wicked: there is no Fortune but his Providence; which is nothing but the Execution of that one general Law, and the Application of it's several parts, in particular Instances: 'tis plain therefore we have nothing now to fear but our selves, if we be but true

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to our own Reason, and faithful to our Interest, we may confidently presume both of the Assistance and Reward of Heaven; there is therefore nothing left now to excuse us from the guilt of our own Ruine; but only that which is wont to be objected by such as are enslaved to some impious Lust, and groan under the weight of those Chains which they made themselves, I mean an Incapacity of Happiness, which is a fourth Objection against the possibility of Attaining Happiness, and is now to be considered.

CHAP. VI.

Of Incapacity.

The Plea of Incapacity, supposes Vertue a sufficient Foundation of Happiness. Incapacity Three-fold, Natural, Moral, Penal. There is no natural Incapacity of Happiness. Grace and Nature reconciled. The Strength of each examined, And demonstrated in Fact, With Reference to Custom and Fashion. Pain and Pleasure. The Force of Inclination Examined.

amined. Dulness Considered, And a light thoughtless temper. Sect. 2. Of Moral Incapacity. The Corruption of Nature, and Divine Assistance, how far they influence the present Subject. 3. Of Penal Incapacity.

They who urge their Incapacity as an Objection against the possibility of attaining Happiness do suppose Happiness to consist in Vertue, in the Pleasure that flows from it, and the blifs that will one Day or other Eternally reward it: they acknowledge, could they but be Vertuous, they should be Happy; but they despair of obtaining such a Conquest over their Vices as may suffice to render their life smooth, equal and steady: and preserve the Peace of their Conscience by giving 'em an unquestionable proof of their Sincerity towards God; without which 'tis impossible that they should be fill'd with a rational Joy and Peace, or abound in a rational Hope. This therefore must be the supposition of my following Discourse.

There may be three different kinds of Incapacities fancied, which for Distinction sake I'll call *Natural, Moral, and Penal*:

Penal : each of which may be thus explain'd in the Notion the Objector forms of 'em: *Penal* Incapacity is that desperate state wherein Man is by God immutably rejected both from Pardon and Assistance. *Moral* Incapacity results from the Strength and Absoluteness of that Dominion which Sin has established over some Men, through a long and continued course of Wickedness. *Natural* Incapacity consists in such an Un-teachable stupidity of Temper, or in such violent and invincible Inclinations to Vice, or in such a slightness, levity and inconstancy of Mind as render Men utterly unfit to receive any lasting Impressions of Vertue, or to make any steady and resolute Attempt of attaining it.

I'll begin with this first, and here I desire to be excused if I do not take upon me to mark out the distinct bounds and limits of *Nature* and *Grace*; These two Sisters are not like those *Chaldee* Brethren, * *Abraham* and *Lot*, that were too mighty to dwell together. No, they delight to mix in loving Embraces, their Wealth and Power encreases by being United; and like some Plants I have
read

*There is no
Natural in-
capacity of
Happiness.*

* Gen. 13.

read of, they never thrive when divided: I shall not dispute, what Power in Man is a Birthright, what a Donative; for alas! Every thing he possesses is a Grace, a Favour of his Prince: his Natural Abilities are so many Graces he derives from God, and as properly such as any accession to 'em which is inspired afterwards: So that when ever I contend that any thing is in the Power of Man, I desire to be understood of all that Power which God has invested him with, whether Natural or Supernatural.

Did Men decry and vilifie Nature, to beget in themselves the more profound Humility, and the more wakeful and solicitous Industry, did they like the *Semnonēs*, in *Tacitus*, load themselves with Chains as the Badge of their subjection to, and dependence upon the Deity, did they magnifie Divine Grace, in order to convince themselves of the Necessity and Efficacy of it, and so to enflame their Importunity and Industry in Quest of it; This were Piety and Devotion, not Error; or however they might exaggerate the Impotence of Nature beyond strict Truth, yet this would be a Safe and Pious Errour, as all humble
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De Morib.
German.

and modest ones are: But when they endeavour to represent Nature vile and corrupt, on purpose that they may the more licentiously pollute and abuse it, when they magnifie and exalt Divine Grace out of a most contradictory and preposterous design to justify their Neglect and Contempt of it, for they would fain have all to be so intirely imputed to Grace, that they would not themselves be put to as much as the trouble of seeking it, 'tis not only an Error, but a pernicious and fatal one: for he that abandons the use of his Reason, renders himself incapable of any Heavenly aid: God gives his Grace to Men, not Beasts; I must therefore oppose this Fancy, and endeavour to perswade Men, that it is in their Power to be Vertuous and Happy: nor can I think this Assertion any way injurious to the Honour or Goodness of God, if it be remembred, that whatever Power I attribute to Man, I acknowledge derived from God. I will therefore with good Assurance proceed and try whether I cannot take in and demolish this Fort which stops our way to Happiness.

They who affirm a great part of Man-
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kind incapable of Vertue, forget that they dishonour God whilst they reproach their Nature: for were it so, To what end could we imagine such Men endowed with Reason and Understanding? not to worship but defie their Maker? and was it for this End that they were made immortal too? had God made Man only to take his Pastime in the World, like the *Leviathan* in the Waves, such a Soul as that which moves the Fish of the Sea, or the Beasts of the Earth, a Sensitive Soul had been most proper for this End: Then might he have enjoy'd himself without Reluctancy, without Controul, without Remorse, without Shame: what can be the proper work of a rational Creature, to which you allow not a Capacity of Vertue and Religion? till you can shew me this, I can never believe that God should endow Man with a Rational and Immortal Mind out of any other Design than such a one as might become such a Being Created after his own Image, which is the Practice of Holiness and Vertue. But what should I wonder that Men should not be aware of their contradicting Reason when they seem

seem to be insensible of that Contradiction even to the common Sense and Experience of Mankind which they are guilty of? To what purpose are there so many Schools of Learning and good Manners founded? To what purpose are there so many Treatises of the Education of Youth writ? To what purpose does the wakeful Parent strive to inculcate the Seeds of Vertue into the Child, and train him up by a wise Discipline to the Practice and Custom of Vertue? To what purpose is the proposal of Rewards and Punishments, and the Restraint of Laws, if either they cannot raise those Hopes and Fears they aim at, or if Hopes and Fears be altogether useless and ineffectual, if no Instruction, no Discipline can mould and fashion rough, unpolished, crooked, incorrigible Nature? Now here tho any Man might have confidence enough to disparage the judgment of Mankind, and attribute all the Pains they take in the Education of Youth, or the Government and Direction of riper Years, to Custom not to right Reason; yet surely he would not so far disparage his own Observation and Knowledge as ut-

terly to deny the success of these means; for not to instance in particulars, 'tis not unknown to any one the least versed in the History of the World, that there have been National Vertues as well as Vices, That there have been times wherein Learning and Religion have been as much in Fashion and Reputation, as wickedness and Barbarism in others: shall we say, those Nations, those times bred none of those Natures, which the Objector affirms are incapable of Vertue? Let 'em shew what Heavenly Influences, what miraculous Power produced this Change in Nature: what should I urge the Power of vain and false principles, the mighty force even of irrational Customs, vanquishing those Inclinations which are more deeply rooted, more closely interwove with our Blood and Spirits than any Inclination to Vice and Folly can be? Such are for Example the love of Life, and the Abhorrence of Pain, and yet what a Contempt of Death is to be found even in the most timorous Sex, as in the *Indian Women*! what a Contempt of Pain even in the weakest Age, as in the *Spartan Youth*! And all this having no stronger

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er Foundation than irrational Custom, and vain Phantastick Principles: why should we therefore be unwilling to attribute to excellent Principles and virtuous Customs, blessed and aided by Heaven, as much Power and Vertue as we do to such as these? if the Natural tendencies of Man to wickedness can be curbed, if his most furious and violent Passions can be restrained and stifled, then I think, it may be as reasonably supposed that Divine Truths, Religious Discipline, together with the Grace of God may effect this, as any thing else whatever. If the pressing Necessities and Perplexities of the State could change the softness and luxury of *Otho* into Military Hardship and Courage; I know not why a rational Sense of the true Honour and Glory of Vertue, and of our Eternal Interest, and innumerable other Considerations which the Gospel lays before us Christians, should not be able to work the same wonders? if the Reverence of *Seneca* or the Senate, or any other Motive could produce a *Quinquennium Neronis*, could restrain the violent Inclinations of that wretched Man, so that his Government for so many

years, should be as gentle and just as that of the most Gracious and Vertuous Princes, why would not the Reverence of God, and the Terrors of Eternity be able to awe and curb the most vicious Nature? This methinks ought well to be weigh'd by all who assert Man's Impotence and Incapacity of Verue, they disparage the Gospel and reproach Grace as well as Man with Impotence and Insufficiency; and yet both the one and the other is the Power of God, and that in order to Salvation: do you Consider, that if you suppose Man by Nature unable to do any thing that is Good, and then deny him, and utterly debar him from God's Grace, you introduce Fate; for what more fatal Necessity can a wretched Creature lie under than *Natural Impotence* utterly destitute and for ever forsaken of Divine Assistance? or if you bereave not Man of Grace, but yet bereave Grace of its *Sufficiency*, do you not understand that the fatal Necessity continues still the same? there is no Change in the Man's Condition, only in this Hypothesis, Grace is dishonoured and reproached as well as Nature? and this reflects very rudely

rudely too upon God, it calls the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Sincerity, the Power of God into Dispute: 'tis inconsistent with the *Power* of God not to be able by his Spirit and Truth to subdue and over-power the Corruptions of Nature; 'tis inconsistent with his *Goodness*, not to be willing to aid his poor Creatures, when they call upon him; inconsistent with his *Sincerity* to afford 'em such aid as must tend to their greater mischief not good, as Grace it self would, if it were only sufficient to increase their Guilt, but not to subdue their Sin: This were indeed *when a Child* Matth. 7.
asked Bread to give him a Stone, and when he asked Fish to give him a Scorpion. 'Tis lastly, as inconsistent with the *Wisdom* of God to confer Grace to no purpose, as it was with his Goodness to confer it to an ill one. These with many others are the absurd Consequences which attend the Denial of the *Universality*, or *Sufficiency* of Grace; but if on the other hand, we do grant that God Almighty is ready to assist every Man who calls on him in his Endeavours after Vertue and Happiness, and that his Assistance is sufficient to the End, for

which 'tis designed; then we must needs acknowledge that 'tis in every Man's Power to be Good and Happy: for 'tis no more than to acknowledge that Man can do what he can do, or which is all one, what God has put in his Power to do. By what a croud of Arguments might I confirm this Truth, sufficient to bear down and even shame the most Impudent Caviller? why are not Men Good? why are they not Happy? shall we say that God doth not Vouchsafe 'em his Grace; shall we impute Men's misery to God? shall we charge that glorious and most perfect Being with want of Compassion or Sincerity towards his poor Creatures? how easie will it be for him to appeal to the Sufferings of his Son; to the vigorous Attempts and Endeavours of his Spirit; to Heaven and Earth stamped with the Impress of his *Power* and *Goodness*, on purpose to teach, invite and almost compel us to worship and obey him; to the various Methods of his Providences contriving and pursuing our Happiness? How easily lastly may he appeal for his Purgation to our own Consciences? And these will tell us, as they ever do, in the Distress-

es of our Fortune and the Approaches of Danger and Death, to what we are to impute the Cause of our Ruine: what shall we say then? doth God vouchsafe Men his Grace, the Revelation of his Truth, and the Assistances of his Spirit, but that this Grace is not sufficient for us? Alas! how easie were it for any of us to refute this Fancy by appealing to the solemn Covenant of our Baptism, to the Characters and Descriptions of Good Men in the Gospel, to the Effects which our Reason teaches us, must be Natural and inseparable from a true Faith and Divine Assistance: But I will choose to make use of one Argument which St. Paul furnishes us with, *Heb. 11.* there the Apostle proves the possibility of pleasing God by Faith from undeniable Instances of Matter of Fact, inferring from what Men have actually done, what 'tis still possible for 'em to do. Omitting the miraculous and extraordinary Effects of Faith, I will reduce the Instances of this Chapter into three Heads. *First*, Such wherein Faith appears victorious over the Temptations which arise from the vicious Customs of the Place Men live in, from the prevalency

2. lency and fashionableness of Sin amongst those they converse with. *Secondly*, Such wherein Faith triumphs over Temptations arising from sensual Pleasures. *Thirdly*, Such wherein it overcomes the sense of Pain, and fear of approaching Evil.

Temptations from fashion conquered.

I will begin with the first sort of Instances. It must be confessed that considering the Propensions of our Body and the Vanity and Sensuality which the Mind naturally derives from it, and from it's Commerce with the World, that 'tis a difficult thing to encounter Temptations naked and alone; how much more Difficult when backed and assisted by Custom and *Fashion*, when universal Practice gives Authority and Reputation to Sin and Folly; and the poor Man is left destitute of the Assistance of good Counsel and the Encouragement of good Examples to encounter not only the Difficulty with which the Reluctancies of our Nature, but also the Reproach with which the popularity and prevalency of Sin cloggs and embitters Virtue: And yet behold *Enoch* in a World (it seems) given up to Sin, did not only keep up in private to the Practice

Practice of despised forsaken Vertue; but was openly and in an extraordinary manner Eminent and Exemplary in it; and therefore was his End as extraordinary as his Life: *for having obtained this Testimony that he pleased God, he was translated.* This was owing to his Faith, he was content to endure the Reproach of the World, that he might obtain the Approbation of God: and despise the Honour and Applause of popular Vice, and fashionable Compliances, that he might gain the Kingdom wherein dwells Righteousness. Such another Example was Noah, his Righteousness was, like his Ark afterwards, rais'd above a Deluge not of Waters but Impiety; he lived in a World so wicked, that it grieved God at his heart that he had made it; in this World he was a Preacher and Example of Righteousness, and his Zeal by an *Antiperistasis*, was not quenched but enkindled by the wickedness of the World he lived in: This too was owing to his Faith, he fear'd those threats which that Impious World scoffed at, and so prepared an Ark to the saving of his House, by which he Condemned the World, and became Heir of the Righteousness

C. 7.

ousness which is by Faith. No doubt when this strange Building was preparing, *Noah* was assaulted by all the Raillery and Contempt, by all the shews of Wit and Reason, Lust and Prophaneness could furnish an impious Age with: This Man (say they) has ever been Singular and Phantastick in the whole Method of his Conversation; there wanted but such a prank as this to compleat Fancy into Madness: He ever dream'd of Judgements, and yet we (he threatn'd) continu'd our Mirth and Pleasure, he alone in Fears and Anxieties has suffer'd the Evils which his Melancholy Fancy created, and which are all that we shall ever see: for how long has he been Preaching dreadful things, and yet still the Sun shines, the Heavens are fair and clear, our Feasts and Lusts have the same relish still: nor does our Experience only convince us of the Falshood, but our Reason of the Impossibility of this Man's Dreams; for which way shall the fixed state of Nature be turned upside down? Whence will this universal Deluge come? will his God break up the Fountains of the Deep? or will he open the Cataracts of Heaven? but
while

while they thus profanely scoffed and measured the Divine Power by their depraved Fancies, *Noah* religiously fear'd, who had a different sense of the Majesty of God and Provocation of Sin: he knew that as Mercy, so Wrath is with God: That as he is *mighty to forgive*, *Ecclus. 16.* *so is he too to pour out Displeasure.* And by this Faith he preserved himself as from the Impiety so from the Punishment of the Old World: for tho he was not like *Enoch* translated, yet being preserved out of a general Ruine, he lived to see an End of the Old World, and give beginning to the New. — To these I might add *Lot*, whose righteous Soul was not infected, but provoked and grieved by the Impieties of *Sodom*. *Joshua*, as Eminent for his Faith, as Victories, who resolved whatever Course the *Israelites* would take (who to the last stood in need of as great Prodigies to rescue 'em from Idolatry, as once from *Egypt*) *He and his House would* *Josh. 24.* *serve the Lord.* These Instances are sufficient to shew the Power of Faith in its Victory over popular Errors and fashionable Sins, and by Consequence, over many Inclinations at once; for the popularity

pularity and prevalency of any Sin is a bait appropriated to our Pride and Vanity, which makes men affect precedence and Superiority in all things which the World admires and applauds; nor is this all, it awakens our natural Inclinations, and invites us to gratify 'em, nay, it enrages natural Appetite by giving it security and Confidence, and by working upon the Fancy and Imagination: for the Sin is always wonderfully set off, that is prevailing and fashionable. I will now pass on to the

*Pleasure
Conquered.*

Second sort of Instances, wherein we may behold the Strength and Power of Faith in its Victory over all Temptations which sensual Pleasure can present us. Numerous are the Instances of this kind which I might produce among the Heathens, where we may find a sense of the Dignity of Humane Nature, of the Decency and Honour of Vertue, and a perswasion of the Necessity of Purity in order to a future state, achieving most manifest Victories over all Carnal and Sensual Lusts; but I will confine my self to two in this Chapter: The first is that of *Moses*, and this is a very

very full and comprehensive one. His Station being so near the Crown of Egypt presented him at once with all that the World can entertain sensual Man with: There was Pleasure, the Snare of the Soft: There was Power and Wealth, the Temptations of the Ambitious Mind: (falsely called great) and there was Honour, the airy Bait of vain unballasted Minds. These each of them single and alone have like *Saul* and *David* slain their Thousands & ten Thousands; and yet that it may appear that their overthrow is to be imputed to their own Negligence and Folly, behold here *Moses* triumphing by Faith over all these, *i. e.* over all the strengths and forces of sensual Pleasures joyned and united together: when he was come to years, he refused to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, and so deserted a Station wherein nothing was bigger than his present Enjoyments if he had pleased, unless his future Hopes, which is the utmost Felicity of a state of sensuality. And what is more yet, what was it he did quit all this for? what was it that he did choose in Exchange? was his Soul too little to fill the great place

place he left? No, *Moses* his Courage was great as any thing, but his Meekness and Humility. Was that height too open and too busie for sensual Enjoyments, and so he retired like *Tiberius* to *Capria*, that he might indulge himself with more security and freedom, and fewer Interruptions? No, he changed Pleasure for Affliction, Treasure for Reproach: the Court of *Egypt* for the Desart of *Midian*; he chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season: Esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of *Egypt*. This was all the great work of Faith: his Mind was sometimes possessed with a just Notion of, and awful Reverence for the God of his Fathers, the God of Heaven and Earth; and therefore beyond the Wants and Dangers of the Desart, he discover'd the Peace and Plenty of *Canaan*, and beyond both the Glories of Eternity; and therefore reasonably concluded that it was more eligible to be the Son of God than of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, to be the Heir of Heaven than of the Crown of *Egypt*; all this is intimated Verse 26. for he had respect to the Recompence of the Reward.

I will add but one Instance more to that of *Moses*, and indeed there can be but one Instance added that is greater, which is that of *Abraham* offering up *Isaac*. In the former we have seen Faith triumphing over superfluous and unnecessary Pleasures; in this we shall see it triumphing over the Natural and inseparable Appetites of Man. What might not *Abraham*, if he had been under the Power of any Principle but that of Faith, have objected against this Command of God? what, shall I Sacrifice my Son, my only Son? This is a Sacrifice might become *Baal* or *Moloch*, but how unsuitable to the Nature of that God I worship? Nor is this less repugnant to his Veracity than his Goodness: Shall I sacrifice the Son of the Promise? is it for this I have forsook my Home, my Countrey, my Birthright, and follow'd God through Inhospitable Desarts and more Inhospitable Nations? are all my Expectations of a numerous and glorious Posterity come to this at last? Thus might *Abraham* have argued, but having a firm belief of the Power, Goodness and Faithfulness of God, he would not go about to prescribe his Wisdom.

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Methods, or to limit his Omnipotence by unbelieving Fancies, or derogatory Conceptions concerning it, but firmly believing that he could do whatever he pleased, that he would do whatever he promised; *he that had received the promises, offer'd up his only begotten Son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac thy Seed shall be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the Dead; from whence also he received him in a Figure.* We have seen Men vanquishing all the Pleasures that the World can present us with, and consequently all those Inclinations and Appetites by which we are carried towards 'em, Faith in these Men encountred and defeated whatever strength and force can be supposed either in Fancy or Imagination or in sensual Appetite, or in Natural Affection, The Conclusion deducible from hence is, That there is no desire of worldly Pleasure in Man so vehement, but that it may be conquer'd; and consequently that we cannot be necessarily betray'd into Sin by any inbred Inclination of this kind: there is but one Natural Principle more, from whence we can imagine any Necessity of sinning to

arise, which is an Aversion to all Pain or Trouble: there are therefore Temptations suited to this Principle in us, such as deter us from our Duty, either by the sense of present, or the fear of impending Evil: And it is thought to be the highest and difficultest trial of Vertue to surmount these Temptations, *i. e.* to be vertuous when Vertue is immediately attended or visibly threatned with great Evils. And yet behold,

Thirdly, In this Chapter numerous Instances of as great Constancy in suffering Pain, as we have seen before of Continence in Rejecting Pleasure, Vers. 35, 36, 37. *Others were tortured not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection. And others had trial of Cruel Mockings and Scourgings, yea moreover of Bonds and Imprisonment, they were ston'd, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword; they wandred about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. See here Faith triumphing over all those things that are the Dread and Terror of Humane Nature, Reproach, Imprisonment, Banishment, Death, Death in all its most affrightful Shapes, Death*

*Pain Con-
quered.*

in all its variety of Torments, nay, many Deaths in the lingring Torments they were frequently put to ; how strong, how firm is this frail weak Nature when supported by a Divine Faith ! All these expected a Happy Resurrection, they saw beyond these Midnight-Clouds, the Dawnings of Eternity, and unspeakable Comforts ready to swallow up and extinguish the memory of their Sufferings ; and in this Confidence they outbraved all sorts of Evils. Nor is it to be wondered at, if Faith which overcomes the sense of present Evils, should disperse the fears of future ones : Hence it was that the Parents of *Moses* despised the Menaces of *Pharaoh*, a Prince Arbitrary in his Power, Cruel in his Temper, resolv'd and bloody in the Execution of Mischief. — Hence it was that *Moses* in the same manner despised the Wrath of this King, and well-knowing that no place would be able to protect him from his Power and Cruelty but the Desert, he forsook *Egypt*, and fled thither ; where he could not but foresee he was to encounter insuperable Difficulties ; but he endured , *as seeing him who is invisible* , and knew that the God of Heaven was

was every where present, and that in despite of every thing under his Protection he should be both Safe and Happy.

Now since there is no Evil the World can threaten us with equal to that of Torments and Death, it were vain and superfluous after we have seen these Conquer'd, to fancy other Evils of a much slighter Nature unconquerable; it were absurd to think that that Man could be frightned from his Duty by popular Reproach, or the Displeasure of great Men, or the Diminution of his Estate, who cannot by Death it self; 'twere absurd to fancy that he who despises Imprisonments, Stripes, Hunger, Nakedness, Torment, in Obedience to his Duty and respect to its Reward, shou'd be discouraged by any little Austerities or Hardships which Vertue may sometimes exact from him.

Tell me now then, you who complain of the Corruption and Impotence of Man, you who magnifie the Force and Power of Temptation, and from both infer the Impossibility of being Vertuous, and consequently of being Happy, what have you to answer to these things, these Matters of Unquestionable Fact? You see

Resolution and Faith in these Examples raised to that height and strength, which no worldly, no carnal Temptation can resist; tell me then why should the Faith of a *Jew* outdo that of a Christian; were their Promises more Glorious and therefore more Efficacious than ours? Look how far short Time is of Eternity, Corruption of Incorruption: so far was their *Canaan* of our Heaven: But suppose they had (as these sure had) a Prospect of the same Heaven, had they a clearer sight of it; or more convincing Evidence of the certainty of it than we have? Alas their *Schechina*, *Bath-col*, the Thunders and Lightnings of Mount *Sinai*, their Pillar of Cloud and Fire were not half so clear assurances of God amongst 'em, as that Glory which shon in the face of Jesus Christ, that Power Communicated from above to his Apostles, the Resurrection of *Jesus* from the Dead, and his Ascension into Heaven, were a manifest Testimony of God, asserting and bearing witness to the truth of our Religion, and particularly of that Fundamental Article in it, the Resurrection of the Body, and Everlasting life. What then, are our Temptations greater than theirs?
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the Confidence of the most sensual Sinner, dares not arrive at this Plea: Let the Voluptuary, the Ambitious confront his Temptations with the Enjoyments or the Hopes of *Moses*: Let the most afflicted, miserable Man ballance his Temptations with *Abraham's* Sacrifice of his Son, or with the Sufferings of those Righteous Men mentioned in the latter part of this Chapter, and he must confess, that his Temptations are as much weaker than theirs, as is his Faith. What then can be said? nothing, unless plainly this, that our Case is not the same with theirs either in respect of our Inclinations or our Assistances: if this were so, then how could these Men stand as a Cloud of Witnesses against us in the last Day? which *St. Paul* intimates in the beginning of the following Chapter: how Natural would it be for us, to wipe off any Accusation or Reproach which their Vertue could fasten upon us by this easie answer? 'Tis true we were foil'd and o'rethrow'n by those Temptations which these Men conquer'd, and well might this happen, for neither had they our Infirmities, nor we their Grace; their Nature was not so

depraved as ours, nor our Grace so sufficient as theirs. Were this so, the Sinner might be more unfortunate, but not more Criminal than the Saint; the different Event of things at the last Day were to be imputed to the different Dispensation, not different use of Grace, *i. e.* to the partiality of God, not the negligence or wilfulness of Man, than which nothing can be more impiously or absurdly affirm'd.

And now, let not hereafter a fancied Impossibility of Vertue discourage the Weak, nor a pretended one excuse the wilful; nothing is more Evident than that there is no Inclination in Man that is Incurable, nor any temptation Incident to our State which is Insurmountable: Let any Man that pretends the contrary consider what Reason has done in some, what Custom, what Faith, in others; Let him himself try, what Reason, what Discipline, what Faith, (from all which I never separate Divine Assistance) can do in him, and I am Confident, he will not then stand in need of any further answer to his Objection; his own success as well as that of others, will be a sufficient proof of it's weakness:

ness: Thus I think I have in general given a satisfactory answer to as many at least as plead Natural Incapacity against the Possibility of being Happy: however that no Discouragement, no scruple may remain, I will give a particular and clear tho' brief answer to each part of this Objection.

There are three things supposed by it to render Man naturally incapable of Vertue and Happiness. *First*, Violent and invincible Inclinations to Vice: against this, as the most considerable part of the Objection, the whole bent and force of the precedent Discourse was levelled, and therefore this needs no farther answer, only here it will be worth our remarking, That those differences that are in the Nature and Temper of Men are not Essential, but Accidental, and consequently they may make the way to Happiness more difficult to some than others, but impossible to none. The strongest Inclination to Vertue (I speak of that which is the result of Natural Temper) seems to me but a weaker Inclination to Vice, every Man has naturally a propension to pleasure, and consequently the sensitive Part
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The force of inclination examined.

of us to sensitive Pleasure; how much finer mould our first Parents were made of than we are, I know not; but this I find, the Desire of Pleasure was Natural to 'em even in Innocence: This was that which the Beauty of the Apple did easily enflame, and that was such a Degree, that I am not able to discern by the Text, to which I should rather impute their Sin and their loss of Paradise, to the Desire of Knowledge, or the Desire of Pleasure: This tendency of the Sensitive Part is Natural to all, but in some 'tis more, in some less violent; unless we may say upon one ground, 'tis equal in all, for the difference of Temper discovers it self rather in the different kinds of Pleasure we pursue, than in the different degrees of our Inclination to it; we are all equally allured and drawn; yet not by the same but several Objects, so that if Lust prevail in one, Ambition as much prevails in another, and Covetousness in a third, and in others Intemperance or Sloth: So that the difficulty of Vertue seems much the same to all the Sons of *Adam*, the strength of Temptation consisting especially in our weakness; not in the
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Excellency of the Object we are taken with, but in our Inclination to it: hence is it as Difficult for one Man to overcome his Covetousness, as to another to o'come his Lust; and restless toilsom Ambition is as luscious and taking with some tempers, as lazy and delicious Luxury with others: if this were well-weighed, it would make us more mild and gentle in our Censure of others, and not so soft and easy in excusing our selves. 'Tis further worth our observing here, that every Man's Vertue derives some tincture from his Constitution and Temper, so that generally speaking, 'tis not difficult to guess a Man's Natural Constitution by the Complection of his Religion; however Vertue ceases not to be Vertue; nor will that slight Allay of the natural Constitution extinguish it's Vigour and Merit, tho it behooves every Man to keep a strict and jealous guard upon his Inclinations, for Nature soon revives even after it has been some time Buried, and to labour most after that Perfection which does most contradict and oppose the particular Vice of his Constitution; for it will be otherwise morally impossible

ble to gain a Conquest over it, and as impossible to gain a Rational Peace and Security without this Conquest.

Dulness implies not an incapacity of Happiness

A *Second* thing which is supposed in the Objection to incapacitate Man for Happiness is an unteachable stupidity, consisting in a slow Conception and treacherous Memory: 'Tis true indeed the Heathen Philosophers did require in their Scholars the Knowledge of many abstruse and difficult Matters, as antecedently necessary to Vertue and Happiness, Skill in Mathematicks fitted a Man for the *Platonick* Philosophy, and the Knowledge of Natural things was the Foundation on which the *Epicuræan* pretended his Divine Happiness and Vertue was to be built; and *Seneca* reckons the unthinking Croud amongst the Beasts that Perish: all of them did with one consent require three things to Compleat a Vertuous and Happy Man; Nature, Education or Instruction, and Custom. To the *First*, they attributed the Disposition to Vertue; To the *Second* the Beginning; to the *Third*, the Easiness and Constancy; and to all three together the Perfection of it. And hence it is that they did distinguish between

tween Perfect and Imperfect, between Political or Social and Philosophical Vertue, and did not deem every Nature Capable of that Vertue which was perfect and Philosophical. But our blessed Lord and Master the Author of the Christian Philosophy requires no such qualifications in those who will be his Disciples; All that he requires, is, an humble and an honest Mind, freed from proud prejudices, possessed with a sincere Love of the Truth, and a sincere Resolution of obeying it; accordingly St. Paul observes that such were most wrought upon by the Preaching of the Gospel: *Ye see your calling Brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: And base things of the World, and things that are despised has God chosen. Nor will any one imagine that Acute and Eminent parts are necessary to render a Man capable of being a Christian, who shall consider the Brevity and Plainness of the Christian Faith and Law: doth it*

1 Cor. i.

Titus 2.

John 17.

Acts 20.

it require a deep and penetrating Judgment, or a firm and tenacious Memory, to enable us to understand or remember that plain and short Summary of Christian Practice? The Grace of God teacheth us to deny all ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and live Righteously, Soberly and Godlily in this present World: or that as brief and perspicuous Abridgment of the Christian Faith? This is life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent: or that excellent Abridgment of both by St. Paul? Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Tis true all things are now ravelled and entangled, and the Faith and Vertue of Christianity is not half so Conspicuous amongst Christians as their Theological Wars, Tumults and Factions; But this is owing to Man not to the Gospel, to the Pride and Superstition of the one, not to the Obscurity of the other: Nor may any one here with any shew of Reason object, That tho the substance of the Christian Faith and Practice is clear, yet the Reasons of both are not so; for who can ever imagine such a Stupidity of Nature as can disable any one

one to understand the Proofs by which the Scripture establishes the great Fundamental Article of our Faith, That Jesus is the Christ, the *Messias* or *Mediator* between God and Man: or what Stupidity of Nature can render it an impossible Task to us to comprehend the two Fundamental Reasons of Evangelical Righteousness, namely, the Sufficiency of it to the Happiness of this, and of another Life, and the Holiness of the God we Worship: I do not write this as if I meant hereby to represent Industry in search of Divine Truths, as superfluous and unnecessary; but to assure all of how mean Capacities soever, of the success of it. I am not Ignorant how much some applaud themselves on the account of acquir'd Knowledge of doubtful or abstruse things; how much others value themselves on a peculiar sort of Politicks remote enough indeed from Vertue; and others on Accomplishments as remote from Reason, as the others Politicks from Vertue; and how much all of them do despise the dulness of those who cannot, & the simplicity of those who strive not to equal em in these Attainments: But all this
doth

doth not beget in me the least Scruple or Suspicion of the Truth I have before asserted ; I know that our Duty is plain, and that the Path of Duty is the most direct and Compendious one to the Happiness of this life and of another : for I know that nothing is so taking with God as an humble Faith, Devout, Pure, Peaceable and Charitable Religion. As to worldly Happiness I know that a Man's own Vertue supported by God's Spirit, and guided by his Truth is the safest and the plainest Guide he can follow in Dark and Tempestuous times ; true Policy consists not in that Address or subtilty of Spirit, which furnishes a Man at all times with plausible Shifts, but in that Integrity and Vertue that needs none : and the Beauty and Life of Conversation consists not in Artificial Faces, Phantastick Dresses, Mechanick Motions, Shrugs & Cringes, much less in Mechanick (for so I may call set forms of) Chat but in an humble, diligent and faithful discharge of the Duties we owe to all those several Relations we stand in, and the observance of those Laws of Conversation which true Philosophy prescribes: This
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is that which will make us acceptable to all, and dear to the wife and Good; Sights and Tricks, and Arts may divert and entertain, but Vertues do charm and captivate; those may open us the way to mens Houses and their Tables, but these to their Bosoms, to their Hearts. The sum of all is, Great Endowments of Nature seem to be Necessary for the Attainment of Unnecessary Accomplishments, common Endowments are sufficient to make us capable of Vertue and Happiness. This *Marcus Antoninus* had well observed, and has as well expressed in several places, more fully, *Lib. 5. Sect. 3.*

more briefly elsewhere thus, *Tho thou despair of being a Logician, a Naturalist, a Mathematician, a Courtier, a State-Empirick, a Tal-
kative Bigot, or a Mi-*

mical Fop, (for these too pass for Accomplishments with some) yet despair not of becoming a Wise man and a Philosopher; tho thou hast not Abilities big enough to make thy Confidence pass for Wit and Demonstration, tho thou hast not the Art

ὅτι ἐν ὀλίγοις κείται τὸ εὖ-
δαιμόνως βῶσαι, καὶ μὴ ὅτι
ἀπὸ λήπτης διαλεκτικὸς καὶ φυσι-
κὸς ἔσθῃς, διὰ τοῦτο ἀπογνῶς
καὶ ἐλεύθερος καὶ αἰδύμων, καὶ
κοινωνικὸς καὶ εὐπειθὴς Θεῷ.
Marc. Ant. lib. 7. Sect 41.

of Wheedling, nor the Talent of shifting and deluding, tho thou hast no faculty for deep dissimulation nor slight Insinuation, tho thy parts lye below all these and a great many other Perfections, yet for all this despair not, thou hast parts sufficient to make thee Happy, thou may'st be free (Redeemed from the Servitude of Vice) Modest, Humble, Charitable, and Obsequious to God, and in these very few things consists τὸ εὐδαιμόνως βίωσαι, The Blessedness of Life.

Likeness &
Inconsiderateness examined.

A Third thing wherein the Objection supposes Natural Incapacity to consist, is such a slightness, levity, and inconstancy of Temper as seems to render Men neither fit for any close Application, nor susceptible of any deep and lasting Impression: it cannot be denied but that some are of such an airy, volatile, and various Temper that they seem to be designed for nothing serious, nothing great, as if like Flowers they were the Sport not work of Nature, made not for Use but Ornament: But I have always observed that Nature makes up defects of one kind by Advantages of another; Thus
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it happens here, those Constitutions which do most want solidity and strength, do most partake of Softness and Tenderness; so that they are as much more apt to receive Impressions, as they are more unapt to retain them than others, like yielding air which the gentlest stroak doth as easily divide and part, as it doth easily return and unite it self again. Hence 'tis generally observed, that that Age and that Sex which are supposed to have least of fixt-ness and Constancy, have most of Heat and Passion in Religion, and those Minds which are worst furnish'd with Courage and Experience, with Judgment and Resolution, are most apt and easie to be moved and wrought upon by Religious, or deluded by Superstitious Fears; and as apt to be tenderly affected by the Representations of Divine Goodness and Compassion; so that like Bodies which have less bulk, but more agility, their Motions nimbler, tho their force and strength be less. Now if this be so, then the Disadvantage of this Temper is not so great as it is fancied, for tho their Passions last not long, they are easily rais'd; and

consequently, if our Addresses to such a Temper be but a little more frequently repeated, they cannot but prove successful, and such Persons by the frequent Returns of Holy Passions will grow habitually devout, and their Devotion will be as steady and more elevated than that of a slower and firmer Constitution: But after all whereever there appears an Exuberancy of this Humour, this is to be imputed rather to their Fortune, than their Nature; a wanton Fortune and too indulgent an Education is generally attended with a gay, wanton and unfix'd Mind. And 'tis true that it is a difficult Matter for such Minds as these to attain to Wisdom and Vertue, but 'tis not because they cannot consider, but because they will not; let but such exchange their haunts of Pleasure for the house of Mourning; let 'em but now and then intermix the Conversation of the wise and serious with that of the giddy, fanciful, and frolicksome; and they will soon find their Humour much corrected, and their Minds better fix'd; to all this, if they could be perswaded to add the Contemplation of a suffering Saviour, of a Holy God, and of a Judgement

to come : and to this the Devotion of the Closet made up of serious Reflection on these Subjects and their own Eternity; this would soon reduce their loose and scatter'd Desires, it would soon recall the roving wandering Mind, and make it delight to dwell at home in the Company of Wise, Devout and Important Thoughts.

And now, I think, I have left no part of this Objection founded upon Natural Incapacity unconsidered. Do Men complain of their heaviness and stupidity? acute Parts and a tenacious Memory are not necessary to make us Vertuous or Happy: do they complain of their violent Inclinations to Sin? I have shewed them Reason, Custom, Faith, curbing and subduing the most Natural or the most outrageous and ungovernable Appetites of Man: do they Complain of the Levity and Inconstancy of their Temper? let 'em retire from the Flatteries and Caresses of a wanton Fortune, and a wanton Conversation; let 'em acquaint themselves with the Wise or the Afflicted, with Divine Truths and their Closets, and this will soon work a Happy change upon them; if they are too soft and delicate

for the bitterness and severity of these Prescriptions, nothing but the much severer Discipline of Afflictions and Judgments can effect their Cure.

2. Of Moral incapacity.

Under this Head of Natural Incapacity that other Objection from Moral Incapacity has been sufficiently answer'd, for Custom is at most but a second Nature; and I have at large discoursed of the Power of Reason and Faith over Nature; I have produced many and unquestionable Instances, wherein we have seen them overcome our most natural and most necessary Appetites, such as are, our Aversion to pain, our love of Life, and such like. Nor is it possible that any vitious Custom should have taken deeper Root in us, or united themselves more closely with our very Beings than these, and therefore it were absurd to fancy them more violent, stubborn, or insuperable; That Expression of the Prophet, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin? or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also learn to do Good, who are accustomed to do Evil*; is but a Pathetick Exaggeration (which is usual in a Prophetick stile) of the Difficulty, not an Assertion of the Impossibility of an habi-

Jer. 13.

habitual Sinner's Change; what has been done, and daily is done can be done, and 'tis in vain to prove what no Man can deny; St. Paul when he had recited a Catalogue of such Sinners as should not enter into the Kingdom of God, doth afterwards add, and *such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* And Tertullian does appeal to the Power and Efficacy of the Christian Religion visible in the Extirpation of vicious Habits wrought by it, as a proof of it's Divine Original; nor are such Instances as these wanting this Day. These, as they do now refute all the Idle Excuses of Sinners, so will they one day be urged in Judgment against them to convince them that they owe their Ruine to their sloth and obstinacy, not their Impotence; tho these Men ought to remember too, that Moral Impotence is ever derived from a voluntary Neglect or Contempt of all the means of Happiness and Vertue: I think I might now dismiss this Objection, having given full satisfaction to all scruples that might disturb or discour-

1 Cor. 6.

rage any well-meaning and honest Mind: and evidently defeated the pretences of such as would fain shroud and shelter their voluntary Sin and Folly under the feigned Excuses of Impotence, Incapacity and insupportable Infirmary or insuperable Temptations; for all these are mixed and combined in every part of the former Objection; and receive one and the same Answer. But I foresee, I shall be thought in this whole Discourse to have had too little regard to our Original Corruption and Divine Assistance; and therefore tho I endeavour'd to guard it in the beginning against all sinister Interpretation; I will here add a brief account of both; especially as far as it shall appear to me to concern my present Enquiry.

The Corruption of Nature Considered.

First, As to the Natural Corruption of Man, if Corruption may be called Natural, on the account of the Tendency of our sensitive Inclinations; some things are very plain, some very obscure; what is plain is this, what the present state of Man is with respect to that Righteousness which the Gospel requires; what is obscure is this, what the

the state of *Adam* before the Fall was, without a clear knowledge of which 'tis impossible to determine how much our Nature is now degenerated (as is supposed) from the Primitive Purity and Excellency of its Creation. *Secondly*, how Guilt and Corruption could be transmitted or derived from *Adam* upon his Posterity; *Thirdly*, What can be supposed properly speaking to be the Demerit, Offence, or Provocation of Original Corruption; what Punishment can be due to it, divided and separated from Voluntary Transgressions. These and a great many things of the like Nature I purposely pass over, as either of no great Importance in themselves, or at leastwise of no great Use to my present Enquiry, and go on to what is Plain and Necessary; and that is, what the present state and Condition of Humane Nature is, for nothing can be more Evident than *that the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh*; These two being contrary one to another in their Tendencies and Inclinations, This Conflict or Opposition of Spirit and Body discovers it self the more, the more pure and

Gal. 5.

Plotinus
Ennead. 1.
lib. 1. c. 9.
Enn. 2. lib.
3. c. 15.
Enn. 3. lib. 1.
c. 8. Aug.
de Civ. Dei.

and perfect the Law is, that we are under: This tendency of the Body is so apparent and undeniable, that it was ever acknowledged by all Wise Heathens. Hence the *Platonicks* frequently impute the Diminution of the Power and Liberty of the Soul of Man to it's Conjunction with the Body; and hence it was that some of them whom St. *Austin* refutes by giving an Account of the Nature of the raised Body, rejected the Christian Doctrine of the Resurrection, judging the restitution of the Body, rather a diminution of, than accession to the Happiness of the Mind. The *Pythagoreans* looked upon the Body as the Prison and the Punishment of the Soul, and in short the Philosophy of the Heathens did consist chiefly in this, the subduing the Appetites of the Body to the Reason of the Mind: and this appears most plainly to be the Drift and Scope of Christian Philosophy; From whence it follows, that the Disorder of Humane Nature (call it Original Corruption or what you please) consists in the *desire of the flesh*, the Lust and Concupiscence of the Flesh. This is Evident from all the Writings of St.

Paul,

Paul, especially *Romans* the 7th, and this is the sense of our Church *Art.* the 9th: Nor indeed are we Capable of Imagining any other Corruption in Man; for if there be a Conflict betwixt Right Reason and Carnal Appetite, if the Tendency of the Body and the Mind be opposite and contradictory, 'tis Nonsense to suppose both Corrupt and Sinful; for then the Contradiction and Conflict would cease: From hence it follows plainly, that we are born with Capacities of and Inclinations to Virtue as well as Vice, tho nothing be more manifest than that the Appetite of the Body exerts it self first, grows up to Strength and Maturity soonest, and doth more powerfully and forcibly move than the Suggestions and Persuasions of Reason: *Secondly*, It is from hence plain, that a state of Righteousness consists in the prevalency of the Mind over the Body, and a state of Sin in the prevalency of the Body over the Mind. And from hence appears the Necessity of Divine Grace or Assistance; for since the Dominion of Righteousness cannot be Established, but in the subjection of the Body, and the

Divine Assistance or Grace Considered.

Bo.

Body doth in power so much o'rematch the Mind, the Appetites of it being both more forward, more violent, more constant, I had almost said, more Natural, than the Dictates of Reason; and this Power receiving daily increase and augmentation by a sensual Education, and by a daily and unavoidable Commerce with the World, and those Temptations which awaken, gratifie and enflame the Appetites of the Body, it were morally impossible that the Mind should master and o'recome the Body if it were not aided by Divine Grace and Assistance; but then it must be remembered, that 'tis repugnant to the very Notion of Aid or Assistance, that it should make void the Necessity of our own Endeavours: as the Light of Revelation doth not extinguish that of Reason but encrease it; so neither does the strength of God's Grace render our Natural strength useles, but improve and help it: This added to what I have said before, comprises all that is necessary to be known concerning Grace, and may be reduced to these three or four Heads. *First*, That the Grace of God is necessary to enable us to live Vertuously

ously and Happily ; *Secondly*, That Grace does not extinguish Nature , or cancel our Obligation to Industry or a careful use of that Natural Power God has invested us with ; *Thirdly*, That God is most ready and desirous to further and assist all Men in their Endeavours after Vertue and Happiness : *And lastly*, That the Grace of God is sufficient for us, or that we receive by it as great an addition of Strength or Spiritual Aid , as being joyned with our sincere Endeavours, is necessary to make us Vertuous and Happy ; if we deny the first of these, we subvert the Foundation of Prayer to and dependence upon God, we can give no tolerable account of at least one third part of the Gospel of Christ, and we unavoidably discourage Mankind from all hopes of Happiness ; if we deny the second , we destroy the very Nature of Man, render all Laws, Exhortations, Admonitions, Rewards and Punishments useless, silly and impertinent ; and make Divine Grace the very foundation of carnal Security, of desperate and destructive Negligence and Sloth : if we deny the third or fourth, we must unavoidably

affirm, either that the Happiness of Man does no way depend upon the Grace of God, or that his misery is fatal and unavoidable: All which are Absurdities gross and palpable to all Minds which lie not under the thickest darkness of blind Superstition and Prejudice. Whoever shall now reflect upon all that has been said will easily be able to conclude that we have no Enemy without us, none within us that can necessitate and compel us to be miserable; Misery may be our Choice or Punishment, it can never be our Fate: Our natural Corruption may invite and incline us, but can never force and compel us to be wicked: for there is no Temptation, no Inclination, which God's Grace and our Industry are not able to resist and o'recome; So that now there remains at last no other Incapacity of Happiness than what is *Penal*, which is the next thing to be spoke to.

*Of Penal
Incapacity.*

Penal Incapacity consists in God's final and immutable rejection of Man from Grace and Pardon. The matter of this Objection shall be fully handled, *Vol. 3.* where I shall be obliged to treat of the Troubles of the Mind, and their Cure;

Cure; In the mean time, all that is Necessary to be observed here is, *First*, That this state of final Rejection from Grace and Pardon is *Penal*, a state to which nothing but Men's voluntary Transgressions can betray 'em, and those too Transgressions of the deepest guilt and most crying aggravations; for surely nothing less can provoke a God *who delights to exercise loving Kindness and Mercy*, a God of infinite long-Suffering and Patience, to pass a Sentence, an irreversible Sentence of eternal Ruine and Damnation upon any of his Creatures. *Secondly*, That no mistaken Fancies of the Unpardonableness of our state may either tempt us desperately to renounce God, our Saviour, and Vertue; it behoves us to consider what ought to be the proper Influence of this Perswasion that there is such a Penal state on this side the Grave.

First, If they who believe such a state will act consonant to their own Opinion, they must not allow themselves in a course of wilful Sin, lest they be insensibly betray'd into that dreadful state.

Secondly, Since Impenitence and Hardness of Heart is a Necessary and inseparable Consequence of that dreadful Sentence which excludes Men from Grace and Pardon ; therefore no Man can rationally conclude himself in this state till he has made all possible attempts to recover himself from his Sin, and that without success ; And because,

Lastly, No man can conclude his Endeavours unsuccessful, till Death surprize him in an Obdurate and Impenitent state ; for habitual Sinners have become eminent Saints, and laps'd Christians, nay Apostates have not only recover'd their former state, but redeemed their Crimes by more than Ordinary degrees of Repentance, Devotion and Charity, and by undeniable Consequence have been restored to God's Favour ; for Grace is in order to Pardon, Sanctification in order to Justification, Vertue in order to Glory ; therefore no Man must give over his Attempts of appeasing God, and subduing his Corruptions, while God continues him in the Land of the Living :

These Rules if observed, will, I question not, render the Persuasion of such a *Penal* state, as the Objection supposes, very profitable and useful to some, and not pernicious to the eternal Interest of any: For he who by the dread of such a state, is deterr'd from bold and provoking Sins, and from an habitual Course of wilful Impiety, reaps an unspeakable Advantage by it; and he who adheres to Religion and Vertue, and continues to his life's End, sincerely endeavouring to please God and obtain his Pardon, shall never suffer any prejudice in another life by his melancholy and mistaken Fancies in this.

Having thus cleared my Assertion, That Happiness is attainable here, from such Objections as seem to derive any Countenance or Strength from Reason, there remains but two more that I can think of, the one whereof presses hard upon me, under a pretended Authority of Revelation, the other urges the Experience of Mankind against me: I will begin with the former, and consider with what aspect Revelation regards the Happiness of this present life, and whether there be any thing in it

21 S that

that forbids the Hopes, or obstructs the Attainments of it. I have now spoke to all those Objections which seem to oppose and assault my position of the Possibility of Attaining Happiness, with any shew of Reason, or pretence of Divine Authority; It is now high time I should proceed to Answer those who against this Assertion oppose not Reasons and Arguments, but Observation and Experience.

CHAP. VII.

Religion no Enemy to our present Happiness.

Happiness the Fruit of Religion, proved by plain Texts, and the natural Instance of Faith, and Vertue. The Doctrine of the Cross not inconsistent with Happiness. Nor that of Mortification.

IF Men were not very ingenious in framing Excuses of their Folly, and

in

in the contrivance and pursuit of Ruine, it would seem very strange that the Gospel which was designed to be the great Instrument of our Happiness, should be alledged to discourage and damp our endeavours after it; that the Gospel whose great end is to fill our Minds with Joy, Peace and Hope, should be traduced as an Enemy to our Pleasure; but so it is, and therefore resolving to leave no obstacle unremoved, nor despise any Objection that has the least Colour or Appearance of an Argument in it, I will Examine this Fancy.

Religion ever had, and always must have the Character of its Author visibly stamp'd upon it; nothing that is not infinitely kind and infinitely wise can be found in any part of Revelation truly Divine, from whence we may rationally conclude, that the great aim of God in the Establishing Religion is to advance the Happiness of Man, and to advance it in a Method consonant to those natural Principles he has implanted in him: Nor did any one inspir'd Author ever think otherwise; *He that* Prov. 29.
keepeth the Law (saith Solomon) Happy

Pfal. 119.

Prov. 3.

is he. Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them: Happy is the man, that findeth Wisdom, and the man that getteth Understanding.

That this was to be understood of actual and present Happiness in this life is apparent from what follows a little after, *Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those that lay hold upon her.* And tho

the Gospel as a higher and more perfect Dispensation doth propose to us as our great and Chief End, Life, and Immortality, yet it doth by no means exclude us from Happiness here; but rather doth establish it upon proper and firm Foundations; and fences it about with

John 14.27.

Impregnable Bulwarks. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the World gives, give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* Now the fruit of the Spirit

Gal. 5. 22.

Rom. 15.

is joy, peace, &c. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, and make you abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Godliness is profitable to all things, having promise

1 Tim. 4. 8.

of

of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Nor can I indeed conceive how the state of a Righteous and Holy Soul should be other than a Happy and blessed one : The belief and confident Expectation of a Heaven must needs be more transporting and ravishing than the richest Fancy of a Sinner, and that Security both in respect of this and a future Life , which a good Man enjoys in the Protection of God and the Assurance of his Favour , who is Almighty, Immutable, &c. must infinitely exceed any thing that a Sinner can attain to, and must exclude those uneasie Fears which do frequently interrupt the Sinner's Enjoyment and o'recast his hopes : he that loves God and Vertue, cannot but be Happy in the daily practice and Enjoyment of what he most delights in : and he, lastly, that hath subdued his Passions and o'recome the World, cannot choose but reap the daily Fruits of so glorious a Conquest, and be constantly entertain'd with pleasing Reflections and delightful Prospects ; and yet if he should enjoy nothing else , that Sovereignty, Liberty, Magnanimity, and Divine Charity, and Enlargement of Soul

which he thereby gains, were an abundant Reward of his Victory. The sum of all is this, A good Man has the best Title to the Blessings of this life, and the Glories of another, he enjoys this World with as great Security, as Wisdom and Moderation, and has an assured hope of a far better when he quits this; the Anticipations of which by Faith, Love, and Hope, do at once facilitate and confirm his Conquest over all unworthy Lusts, and entertain him with unexpressible Satisfaction and Pleasure.

For this Reason, I do in this Chapter discourse of Happiness without that immediate regard to another life, which might be expected: not judging myself oblig'd either to prove the Certainty of it, or to demonstrate the Reasonableness of embracing Misery during the space of this short life, in Expectation of that Perfect and Eternal Happiness which is promised hereafter; since I saw well enough that in the ordinary course of Providence, the Happiness of this life and the other, were not incompatible: but on the Contrary, that that wherein the Life and Being of true Happiness in this World doth consist, was

was but a necessary Introduction to, or Qualification of us for the Happiness of another; which doth in some measure already appear, and will much more in the progress of the following Discourses.

21 But what becomes now of the Doctrine of the Cross? this is a very soft and mild Commentary upon that of our Saviour, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.* But this is not so formidable an Objection, as it may at first sight seem, 'tis true, Suffering through all the Progress and Stages of Evils even to the last, that is, Death it self, was a common, nay almost an Universal Duty in the beginning of Christianity, being indispensibly Necessary to the Propagation of the Gospel; but blessed be God, the Obligation of that Duty has long ago ceased; And all that I can think necessary to be said here in pursuance of my design is, That the pleasures of those Confessors and Martyrs did far out-weigh their Sufferings whilst they lived; That when they suffer'd Death it self, the time was come when they must exchange Tem-

The Doctrine of the Cross no Obstruction of this life's Happiness, Matth. 16. 24.

poral for Eternal Happiness. Nor doth this at all infringe the Truth of my proposition, which doth not vainly assert an Eternal Duration of Happiness in this life, but only teaches the possibility of attaining it. And I think the Death of Martyrs and Confessors, is rather a great Confirmation than Confutation of this Opinion: teaching us plainly that in despite of all Calamities, 'tis not only possible to live, but to dy Happily; which last is no small accession to Temporal Happiness. From this little I have said on this Occasion, 'tis easie to shape an answer to what is Objected from St. Paul, *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*; 'tis confessedly indisputably true, that had these Christians been destitute of that hope which was their support, they had sunk under the weight of such Sufferings, and so had been the most miserable of all men: but since their hopes did not only support 'em under their Afflictions, but also render them somewhat more than Conquerours; all that can follow hence is, That the Resurrection and Eternal life are unquestionable Truths, and

and that he who believes in as firmly as Confessors and Martyrs did, may like them be *Happy*, tho' a Thousand Seas of Calamities and Troubles should break in upon him.

As to Mortification which is a Duty of perpetual Obligation, (for the Priority of Religion is still the same, tho' its fortune in the World be altered) this did at first signify the Renunciation and Extirpation of Jewish and Pagan Lusts according to that of St. Paul, *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the Earth; Fornication, Uncleaness, Inordinate affection, Evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness which is Idolatry;* and it still signifies the same thing, and whatever difficulty we are to encounter in the performance of this Duty, it must be vanquished, for 'tis impossible to be wicked and happy: a wicked man is his own *Hell*, and every Passion, every Lust is a fiend, a Fury that doth outrage and torment him; and all this the Heathens themselves did not only constantly acknowledge, but also paint out with as lively Eloquence as any Christian could ever do: their Experience, (over whom Sin had an uncontrolled do-

Mortification recommended by the Light of Nature as subservient to our present Happiness.

Col. 3. 5.

mini-

minion), most effectually convincing 'em of the Outrages of Tyranny, and unspeakable Mischiefs of wicked and abominable Passions; Nay, so manifest is it that the subduing these Irregular Passions is necessary to our Happiness, that even the Epicureans themselves (notwithstanding their confining the Happiness of Man to this short life, and by a probable Consequence, resolving it ultimately into the Enjoyments of the Body) did yet look upon themselves as extremely injur'd by *Folly*, and others, when they represented 'em as revolted from, and Enemies to *Vertue*. 'Tis not my business here to examine what foundation for *Vertue* their Philosophy could leave, or what rank and place they could assign it, 'tis enough that they could not but acknowledge it as necessary to Happiness. 'Tis true, Mortification in the Gospel sense, requires us not only to restrain these Irregular Lusts, but also not to over-rate and over-value this World and the things of it; not to look upon this life as our only or chief Portion; and doat upon it with fondness and passion; and I cannot think that this is any thing more

more than what is imply'd and included in the former Notion of Mortification: this Moderation of our Inclinations to the World, being a proper and necessary foundation of the former Abstinence; it being very Improbable that he who values and doats upon the World above all things, should refrain from irregular Pursuits and Enjoyments of it. Now even this Degree of Mortification, and the Necessity of it in order to Happiness was as clearly taught by the Wise men amongst the Heathens, as by our Saviour and his Apostles, by those conducted by the light of Nature, as by these conducted by the Light of Revelation: and that together with the Discipline which promotes it, I mean the observation of great Abstinence from sensual Pleasures: No Monk or Anchorite can speak with a more glorious contempt of the World than a Stoick; but their flights who would allow the Body, the World, and the things of it, no place nor degree in the Number of Good things, are too daring and bold to lay any stress upon; but the Opinion of other Philosophers who allow'd these their proper place and value, ought to be

be of weight with us, because they shew us plainly, That Mortification was ever thought by the Light of Nature subservient to our true Happiness. Hierocles in the beginning of his Divine Comments gives us a short but full account of the Pythagorean (and I may add Platonick) Philosophy in this Point.

φιλοσοφία δὲ ζωὴς ἀνθρώ-
πινος χάρις, καὶ τελειότης.
χάρις μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς ὑλικῆς
ἀλλογίας, καὶ τῆς θνητῆς σὺ-
μμεσθ. τελειότης δὲ τῆς οὐκείας
ἐνζώτης ἀναλήψης, πρὸς τὴν
θεῖαν οὐσιώσιν ἐπαναγούσα.
ταῦτα δὲ πύρην ἀρετῆς καὶ
ἀλήθειαν χάρις ἀπεργάζεσθαι
ἢ μὲν τὴν ἀμελείαν τῆς πε-
ρὶ τῶν ὑποκειμένων, ἢ δὲ τὸ θεῖον
εἶδον, ἐνυψῶς ἔχουσα, προσ-
κωμμένη.

The substance of which is, *The business of Philosophy is to purifie the Soul of Man from sensual Lusts and inordinate Passions, and to transform it into the likeness and Image of God; This is that which it pursues by discovering to us Excellent Truths, and by recommending to us the practice of Excellent Vertues.* And this was that Philosophy which the best and acutest of the Heathens looked upon as the only way to Happiness; so far were they from judging it inconsistent and incompatible with it; nay, they deemed this very state of Vertue a state of more Exalted Happiness, and an Image of the Di-
vine

vine Life: hence is that little less than

Inspir'd Heat or Rapture

of Tully, When the Soul

having discovered and en-

tertained Vertue has ex-

tinguished its fondness

for, and indulgence of

the Body, and stifled Lust

as the Reproach and

Stain of it's Honour and

Beauty, and hath put

off all dread of Death

and Pain, &c. What can be said, or as

much as fancied, more blessed than the

state of such a man? Nay, after all, the

greatest Patrons and Abettors of Plea-

sure did ever acknowledge this modera-

tion in our Passions and Enjoyments

indispensibly Necessary to our Hap-

piness.

*Cum animus cognitis percep-
tisque virtutibus a Corporis obse-
quo, indulgentiaque discesserit,
voluptatemque sicut labem deco-
ris oppresserit, omnemque mortis
dolorisque timorem effugerit, So-
cietatemque Charitatis coierit
cum suis, omnesque natura con-
iunctos suos duxerit, Cultumque
Decorum & puram Religionem
susceperit, & exacerit illam, ut
oculorum sic Ingenii Aciem ad
bona diligenda & rejicienda
Contraria. Quid eo dici aut ex-
cogitari poterit beatius? Lib. 2.
de Leg.*

Nil admirari prope res est una Numici,

Hor.

Solaque possit facere ac servare beatos.

Nought to admire's the thing alone

that can

Cause and preserve the Happiness of

Man.

And

And 'tis well known how much the followers of *Epicurus* gloried in his Abstinence: that these Voluptuaries should prescribe and practise the Doctrine of Mortification! but this they were compelled to by the irresistible force of Reason; for how can he who floats upon the World, and melts in soft and sensual Pleasures, be able to secure the repose of his Mind against those melancholy Alterations which may daily and some time or other will certainly befall himself and his Enjoyments? on what foundation can the Peace or Liberty of his Mind be Established? or can he be happy who is distressed by every change of Weather, and is divided and distracted between numerous, contrary Passions, and a slave to each?

To come to a Conclusion, the Scripture is so far from denying, that it do's affirm the possibility of attaining Happiness; nor are the Sufferings of Confessors and Martyrs, or the Doctrine of Mortification any prejudice to this Assertion; for neither Affliction nor Mortification are inconsistent with the true

time Happiness of Man: that Affliction is not; the Example of those very Martyrs and Confessors triumphing over it do's sufficiently evince; that Mortification is not, is unanimously confest'd by the Suffrages of such as were conducted by the Light of Nature, and of such too as were entirely devoted to the pleasures of this Life; and that upon undeniable Grounds.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Matter of Fact or Experience.

The state of the Poor. The Gay and Silly.
The Basse. Princes. The Learned,
whether Happy. The Happiness of
the Devout Questioned, and Demonstrated
by Instances.

After all the Pains I have taken in the First Section to demonstrate that the pursuit and search after Happiness is a rational Undertaking, an Employment becoming the nature and state of Man: And after all that I have taken in

in this second to demonstrate the possibility of attaining it, and to disperse all Objections to the contrary, there remains still one Objection, which if true, were sufficient to discourage the Endeavours and chill the heat of the most Vertuous and Resolved Ambition. Which is this.

It is true, Happiness may be found in Speculation, but rarely if ever in possession and fruition: The Number of the Fortunate and Happy is extremely small; and most Men, if not all, when they have worn life to it's last Period, may give that account of it which the Aged (and as others no doubt thought Happy) Patriarch did of his to Pharaoh, *Few and Evil have the Days of the Years of my life been.* But it moves me not so much to hear this from the mouth of a Shepherd who from his Youth led a laborious and unsettled life: But when I read the mournful Poems of *Jab*, the Discontents and Melancholy of *Solomon*, Men no less Eminent for Wisdom and Philosophy than for their Worldly Glory and Prosperity: when I read them bewailing the Lot of Mankind, unable to reflect upon it without

Gen. 47.

without a mixture of Indignation, Contempt and Womanish Sorrow, I cannot but acknowledge that I am shrewdly tempted to despair of Happiness as of something too great and Divine to make its abode upon Earth, and to look upon all the fine Discourses that Men make of it only as so many flights of a bold fancy. Happiness! what is it? or where is it? in what distant Coasts or unknown Regions do's it dwell? who and where are the Fortunate? who and where are the darlings of Heaven to whose Lot it happens? Shall we like *Bajazet* in a melancholy Humour think Poor, Silly, Lazy Peasants Happy? O happy Shepherd who hadst neither *Sebastia* nor *Orthobales* to lose: as if secure Beggary and slothful want were Happiness; happy thus might I call the Man born Blind, he has no Eyes to lose.

Knowl's
Turkish
Hist.
Poor whether
Happy.

Or shall we call the gaudy swarm which (like Flies and Insects in Gleams of Sunshine) do buzze and flutter in the Rays and warmth of Greatness and Prosperity? Shall we call these Happy? Ah! These are they that furnish Theatres and Poets with Tragick Stories; amongst these, Restless Passions, Contem-

The Gay &
Silly whether
Happy.

T

ptible

ptible Levity, ungovernable Insolence, wither'd and meagre Envy, wandring Lust, Empty Pride, Loud and senseless Confidence, and finally shameful and fearful Sins have their abode: and can we call those Happy who are infested with such Legions of Evils? *Miserere tu felicitum*, they are their own burden whil'st they are other's Envy.

The Busie
whether
Happy.

Shall we then call the busie trading World Happy? alas! these would have thought it a Happiness not to have needed to trade or toil, they love Wealth, but most admire

Martial.

Res non parva labore sed relictæ,

Not Gold they labouring dig themselves
in Mines,

But what the toiling Ancestor resigns
To his more happy Issue.

Princes
whether
Happy.

If this be so, one would think I might boldly present you with the envied Glory of mighty Princes, as an unquestionable Instance of Happiness: but alas! the wisest of the Heathen Gods preferr'd the Happiness of *Aglaus Sophydias* before that of *Gyges*! And the wisest of Men (in his time at least) preferr'd

fer'd the Happiness of *Tellus* before that of *Cræsus* ! And this Sentence seems not only to deny those particular Princes Happy, but also to pronounce the very state of Royalty incapable of Happiness, or at least less capable than that of a Plough-man ; indeed this state when active and glorious is full of Fears, and Cares, and Hazards ; when sluggish and unactive full of Shame : what can be the Happiness of a state too big for Friendship or for Pleasure ? for love is the Business and Enjoyment of Equals ; Obedience is all Subjects can offer, or indeed Monarchs can receive : All higher and nearer approaches to the Throne are but intrusions of Ambition and design ; Nor can I possibly discern what Satisfaction the great Mortal can take in any Expressions of Duty or Affection, which he can never distinguish from the fawning and flattery of those who in their hearts despise and hate him : How shall he know that any truly love him, when none dare slight him ? or how shall he discern who serves him out of Duty, where every Man even obtrudes himself upon his Commands out of Interest ?

In a word, the Passions of a Prince are so much greater than other Men's, as is his Mind and Fortune; his Conversation is not with the Minds of Men, but with Faces, or rather Masks and Disguises. And as to his Pleasures, his gust of 'em is very flat, being cloy'd and surfeited by his Affluence. And whereas all other Men, as the Ambitious, the Vain-glorious, the Covetous, the Lover seem to ascend and rise above themselves in the Acquisitions of those Pleasures they aspire to; the Monarch debases himself, descends and stoops below his Fortune to meet *his*. And yet I am not of *Apollo's* nor *Solon's* Mind, I cannot think there is any great Happiness in the Ignorance and the quietness of a labouring Cottager, such as *Tellus* or *Aglaus Sophydius*; I love Security, but not that which Contempt breeds, I would have my Security owing not to the Littleness of my Fortune, but the Greatness of my Mind: I love a Quiet but a Philosophical life. I would have my Tranquillity spring not from the Ignorance but Reason of my Mind; from the Right Government of my Passions, not from the meanness of my

my Education or Fortune. For the same Reason I do not call Men happy, whose slow and easie Temper, like the waters of the Dead Sea, is not to be mov'd even by Wind and Storm: I do not call Stupidity a Calm, the Soul that is insensible of Trouble, is so of Joy too; whoever is incapable of any deep Impression, is so of any serious Reflection too, and what is the state of such a Man? I would not have my life pass by like a dream, whilst fleeting or imperfect Images of things do scarce awake, and too too slightly affect my drouzy or dazled sense. In a word, the Happiness I seek after is such a one which is owing neither to Natural Constitution, nor to Fortune: for then, it would not be in our Power.

Whom then shall we call Happy? *The Learned whether Happy.* Surely if any, the Knowing & Learned: these are the Souls that converse with Heaven, that dwell continually in the pure Light, and feed upon the Bread, the Joyes of Angels. But alas, if Happiness were the inseparable Companion of Learning, how came the Stoick's ador'd *Cato* to be led by Pride and Humour and Vain-glory through burning

Sands and dreadful Desarts? how came he in a mood of desperate discontent to dy his own Murderer? Whence was it that the Learned and Eloquent *Tully* after so many brave Discourses of the Contempt of Death and Pain, and briefly all humane Evils; did sink so poorly under the weight of his Misfortunes? whence was it that after he had taught the Soul's Immortality, and it's Translation into some glorious Star, he should at last be so unwilling to let it leave this vile Clod of Earth, and the Decay'd, Melancholy and darksome Mansion of the Body? if Learning did put Men in possession of Happiness, why was our *Raleigh* so uneasy, so unfortunate, not more toss'd by a restless Fortune than a restless Mind? Why was our *Verulam* so utterly a Stranger to Happiness in both Fortunes, as unable to govern and enjoy Prosperity aright as to bear up under Adversity? if Learning were so Sovereign an Antidote against Misery, if Philosophy were such a Paradise, and Speculations were such luscious Meals, the very fruits of the Garden; why do the Learned leave their Sacred shades to haunt the Houses of

of great ones, or the Courts of Princes? why do they fawn and cringe, and with all imaginable assiduity and artifice labour to insinuate themselves into such men whose Esteem for them is a just Scandal to them, and their Favours but so many publick marks of Reproach? O vilest sort of Servitude! can it consist with the grandeur of a Philosopher, with the true Liberty of a Christian Spirit to lacquey some Favorite of Fortune, and for many years together with an obstinate Stupidity digest the Capricies of his Humour, and not only dissemble his Vices, but magnifie even his Vanity and Folly? and not this only, but there are slavish Arts of Insinuation to be practised upon every one that's near him: O glorious Merit! when the same thing recommends the Philosopher that doth the *Valet de Chambre*, or the Footman! and yet after all, even this equals not the baseness, the slavery of those who prostitute Philosophy and themselves to the Multitude, and make an Ignorant and Insolent Herd the Arbitrary Sovereigns of their Principles, their Liberty, their Happiness, for this depends upon their

Popularity. O how far should I prefer the humble contented and independent drudgery of an honest Hind, before this unmanly Servitude! how far shou'd I prefer the generous and undesigning freedom and unconcernment of a Poet (whatever Ignorance or Contempt of Interest it may be traduc'd for) before the former sort of servile Philosophick Proggers!

*The Happi-
ness of the
Devout ques-
tioned.*

And now there remains no place where Happiness can as much as be suspected to dwell, unless among the Devout and Religious. These sure live in Raptures and Transfigurations on the Mount, these sure have their Conversation in Heaven, and from thence derive Glory, and Liberty, and Joy, and Peace and Hope, these are Partakers of Divine Nature, how can they therefore be destitute of a Divine Happiness? But alas! behold the Blessed Jesus, and we shall find him as the Psalmist and the Prophets represent him, *A man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.* Hear again the most Zealous and the most Elevated of our Divine Master's Disciples, *If in this life only*

we have hope in Christ, we are of all ^{1Cor.15.19}
men the most miserable.

O Happiness!

*Thou Blessed State or rather pleasing
sound,*

*Thou always sought and never to be
found!*

*In what Grot, do'st thou, or what Cell,
Or in what Court or Temple dwell?*

*Where and what art thou? art thou
merely Name,*

*No otherwise known than by Reports and
Fame?*

Art a Reality? or art thou just

*Like publick Good and publick Trust,
A solemn, sacred, but deceitful Notion?*

But to return from this Revery, this ^{Obj. answered.}
is after all but a slight and popular Ob-
jection, which from the Evil Conse-
quences which attend the Sins and Fol-
lies of the Multitude, and from those
Complaints which humane Infirmary
has sometimes wrung from the wise and
vertuous, would unfoundly and illogi-
cally infer, that there is no such thing
as Happiness here below: besides the
Sufferings of Martyrs and the words
of

of St. *Paul* have been considered in the foregoing Chapter, and in the second Chapter of this Section the Reader may find some Instances of Happy men which is a punctual Answer to this Objection; but you will say tis a very short one, to an Objection of so great weight and of such general credit, and spun out by me my self to a very great length: I acknowledge it deserves a fuller Answer, and therefore, after I have told you that I have made a show of hunting after Happiness in several conditions of life, only to rally and expose their Folly who suppose it may be found in a luckie Juncture of Circumstances, I will give you one.

The Men then whom I call Happy, are such who are possessed of true and solid Goods, and those such which Fortune cannot give nor take away; such were *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and such are all those at this Day as are transformed into the Glory and Image of the Divine Nature by the mighty Energy of the Divine Spirit and Divine Truths. Let us consider therefore what the state of *Christ* and his Apostles was in this Life: I will not take notice
of

of those Ecstatick Pleasures which they felt when they did those God-like Works which we call Miracles, what Triumph could be equal to theirs who saw Diseases, Devils and Death subject to their Commands? What joy could be equal to theirs, when they gave Life to the Dead, Sight to the Blind, Strength to the Lame, &c. To what a height was Wonder and Delight rais'd in each of these Performances? for nothing could be more wonderful than the Power, or delightful than the Charity conspicuous in 'em: but this I pass over, because this Power is not to be attained by us: Let us come to that which is, I mean the Vertues of Christ and his Apostles; *He had not a hole where to lay his head*: 'tis true, but how truly great was he in himself? how much above the mean and unmanly desires of Ambition, Covetousness, or Lust? he indulg'd himself in no sensual Carnal Pleasures, 'tis true, but how Calm that Soul which no Angry or Envious Passion disturb'd, where nothing but sacred Love dwelt: the love of God, the love of Man, and the rational and wise love of himself? how Happy that Soul
which

which was illuminated with Divine Knowledge, supported by an unshaken Faith, fill'd with joyful Reflections and glorious Hopes; that Soul which in the silence of the Night, and the Retirements of the Mount did pour forth it self in Prayers and Hallelujah's, that Soul which full of God and full of Heaven, had no room for uneasie Cares or afflicting Sorrows; 'tis true, our Saviour met Death with pale looks and melancholy pangs of Soul; but 'tis as true, that his Faith surmounted his Fears, his Agony endured but for a little while an undisturb'd Peace, and a well-settled serenity of Mind immediately follow'd it, and his trouble and Pain in Death, like the Eclipse that attended it, did but o'rcast and darken the joy, the light within, not extinguish it, who could finish the last Act of Life with more humble Majesty, or with more settled Peace? in the Life and Death of our dear Lord we behold that of his Disciples, for they were all followers of him, as they desired we shou'd be of them: what can be happier than their state here was? their Life was Regular and Philosophical, their Joy steady and

and Rational, their Love of God vigorous, their Charity to Man fervent and diffus'd; their Desires, as to the World, modest; their Minds resolved and brave in Afflictions, Cheerful and Compos'd in Death in self.

Let it stand then as an unshaken Truth, That Happiness may be attain'd in this Life: for what the Followers of our Lord and Master attain'd to, that may we; their Natural Passions and Infirmities were the same with ours, our Trials and Temptations are far less than theirs; we serve the same God, we are guided by the same Truths, supported by the same Power, elevated by the same Hopes; we have the same Peace bequeath'd us, the same Spirit, the same Heaven promised us, and we march under the Conduct of the same Captain of our Salvation, who by his Death has abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light. Nor ought this to seem to us an over-daring or Presumptuous Position, since the Possibility of Happiness is a Notion Consonant to the common sense of all Mankind: for 'tis Happiness which Laws, enacted for the Government of the

the Multitude, and Philosophical Rules prescrib'd for the Government of our Passions, do aim at; all Law-givers have ever promised the People Wealth, and Peace, and Glory, and Security, as the fruits of their Obedience: and all Philosophers have ever promis'd Tranquillity of Mind and Rational Pleasure to their Followers as the Rewards of Conformity to their Precepts: And as it cannot surely be denied, but that the Kingdom is most Happy, which by just Laws and a well-temper'd Authority, is freed from those Fears and Distractions, from those Mischiefs and Confusions to which others are expos'd by Anarchy or Tyranny, by the Insolence of the Multitude, or the Impotence of the Prince: so it cannot be deny'd, but that the Man is most Happy, whose well-settled Peace is established upon solid Grounds of true Wisdom; being neither oppress'd by the Tyranny of Superstition, nor vexed and disquieted by the Insolence of unruly Passions, to which the weakness of Reason subjects Men. As to Religion, which is a third governing Principle; this only proposes a more perfect Happiness, and

and a more plain and direct way to it, than Nature of it self could: it only relieves and recruits our Natural Power by that of Grace, and encreases the Light of Reason by a participation of new Rays of Revelation. If then, Happiness be the great End which Law and Philosophy, Revelation and Reason, God and Man, do unanimously propose to us; how absurd and palpable a Contradiction were it to all these, to deny the Attainment of it possible?

The Conclusion of this Second Section.

To look back now upon this whole Section, and sum up the substance and force of it, 'tis this: God who made us, made us on purpose to be Happy; for what other design could Infinite Love propose to it self in our Creation? and proposing to himself this End, he endow'd us with Faculties and Capacities that might fit us for the Contemplation and Enjoyment of himself, and his Works: The World provided by him for our Entertainment, he filled with all things that could minister either to our Necessities or Delights: here God has
planted

planted us, not as Inhabitants but Sojourners; for this is but our state of Probation. Angels had their times of Trial, so have Men; here he would have us aspire after, as near as we can, that life Angels lead in Heaven; for we are one Day to be equal to them: here he would have us learn and practise those Virtues which fit us for the Society and Enjoyment of that Kingdom wherein dwells Righteousness, for that is the blessed End and Consummation of all our Endeavours, Desires and Hopes; but when we make Heaven the Abode, the Seat of Perfect Happiness, we do not thereby suppose that it is banished from the Earth, but rather on the contrary, if that state be the Consummation of all things, 'tis necessarily to be concluded that every step we advance nearer to it, we mount and ascend higher, into brighter, calmer and purer Regions: Heaven is like a Glorious Building, whose access is full of Delight and Beauty; for as that Youth which precedes our Manhood, has its Sweetness, its Beauty, its natural Perfection and Pleasure; so has this Mortal state which precedes our Angelical,
its

its proper Degree of Perfection and Blessedness : And this is no small one neither, for as we are created but a little lower than the Angels in respect to the Dignity of our Nature, so surely our Happiness begins nearly to approach and resemble theirs : When our Mind fill'd with Divine Truths, Charity and Hope becomes Free, Generous, Resolv'd, Constant, Chearful, Meek, Gentle, Devout, Heavenly : when it has so accusom'd it self to Vertue, and familiarly acquainted it self with Heaven, that the Sins and Pleasures of the sensual part of the World look like the Manners and Entertainments, not only of a Foreign, but Barbarous and Impoverish'd Countrey ; and when lastly by its frequent Retirements from the Body, and daily Commerce with Rational and Spiritual Pleasures, it not only asserts its Sovereignty over it, but begins to live so independent of it, that at the last when it shall in Death mount up upon the Wings of pure Flame to Heaven, it shall not suffer as if the Body needed to be torn from it, but shall let it fall, as *Elijah* did his Mantle. Those Complaints therefore which we make against

our present state, and those Reproaches with which we outrage and vilifie our Nature, are false and unjust, for we are by God created and design'd for Happiness, and this Happiness God hath been pleas'd to put in our own power to place within our reach : There is no Fate, but what God has made us our selves Arbiters of; we lye under no Necessity, no Fatality, but what our own Vices betray us to; Nor do we stand in need of the Indulgences of Fortune, the Traquillity and Pleasure of a Vertuous Man is an Image of God's own; it springs from within, not from without? 'tis true there are Difficulties which obstruct our Progress to Happiness; but they are such as all wise and good Men have Conquer'd: 'tis true, Nature labours under its Infirmities, that is, sensual Propensions and Inclinations; but it is strengthen'd and supported by Reason, by Revelation, by Grace: we may fall ('tis true) a Sacrifice to God's Wrath, but it must be after we have lived long in Contempt of his Mercy, and obstinate Defyance of his Grace. Methinks these Considerations should raise and exalt the Mind of Man, they should inspire

inspire us with Desires and Hopes worthy of Rational and Immortal Souls, like the *Israelites* when they marched out of *Egypt*, we should dream of nothing but Triumph, Glory and Happiness.

SECT. III.

The Causes and Remedies of Man's Unsuccessfulness in his pursuit of Happiness.

CHAP. I.

The general Cause of Ill Success. Deviation from Reason, the general Cause of Man's ill Success. The Effects of which are, 1. The proposal of false ends. 2. Coldness in pursuit of our true end.

WERE the Happy, like * *Tully's* Wise man, a mere Idea something no where to be found but in the

* Quem adhuc nos quidem vidimus Neminem, sed Philosophorum sententia qualis futurus sit si modo aliquando fuerit, exponitur. Tusc. Quæst. 1. 2.

Characters and Descriptions which Philosophers give us of him, this were an unconquerable Discouragement : no Briskness of Wit, no Charms of Fancy, no force of Eloquence, no height of Spirits or height of Confidence were sufficient to remove it, and to engage Men in such a desperate and unaccountable Enterprize as this Supposition would render the pursuit of Happiness : for how fond and groundless a Presumption were it to pursue that which all Mankind had ever as Unsuccessfully as Earnestly and Indefatigably attempted? I have therefore endeavoured with all my might in the former Chapter to free men's Minds from any Suspicion or Fears of this Kind, answering all Objections that might seem to represent *Misery fatal*, or *Happiness unattainable*, and by undeniable proofs Confirming the Opposite Truth. But if this be true, that Happiness is attainable, and if it be as true, as certainly 'tis, that there needs no Eloquence to enkindle in any Man the Desires of Happiness, or to incite and spur him on to endeavour it's Attainment, all Mankind being carried on towards it by Natural, and therefore

fore Constant and Passionate Inclinations; will it not be Natural to demand, Whence is it that so few are Happy? Whence is it that Misery and Trouble, Affliction and Sorrow fill almost every place and every Bosome? Not only no Kingdom or City, but no Town, no Village, no Family, I might almost add no one particular Person, being exempt and free; no place or person is privileged against Grief and Trouble, it invades the Tribunal of Judges, the Thrones of Princes, and what is almost as sacred as either, the Retirements and Closets of the Devout and Learned; nay scarcely is the Church and the Altar a secure Sanctuary against it.

This will not be difficult to Comprehend, if we do thorowly weigh and soberly consider the true Causes of Man's Misery; but the particular and distinct Discussion of each of these will fall in, in its proper place in the following Treatises, and therefore I shall Discourse of them here onely generally and briefly, as the Nature of an Introduction requires.

Many are the particular Causes of Humane Misery, but they may all be

*Deviation
from Reason
the general Cause
of Man's
Misery.*

reduc'd to this Universal and Immediate One, Namely, *That we do not live Conformable to our Reason.*

—Quid enim Ratione timemus aut cupimus —

When do our Affections spring from, or when are they governed by Reason? When are our Desires or Fears, our Joys or Sorrows Wise, and Just, and Rational and Holy? how frequently are our Actions nothing else but the brutish and blind Sallies of foolish Passions, and our lives are generally nothing else but the Wandrings and Rambles of deluded Imaginations? How commonly do we act what we our selves Condemn? and how commonly doth the whole Course of our Lives displease our selves as much as others; and yet we live on in Contradiction to our Reason, and sometimes to our Inclinations too: How unlike are we in our Conversation to our selves in our Retirement? how unlike are we in the Devotions of our Closets to our selves in the Employment of our several Professions? how calm, sedate, wise, holy, and resolved in the one? how anxious and uneasy, how foolish, earthy, and
in

inconstant in the other ? but in nothing does our Deviation from Reason more evidently appear than in two things.

First, In our proposing to our selves false and irrational Ends of Life ; and *This Deviation discovers it self.*

Secondly, In our Insincerity in pursuing the true and rational one, *that* is Happiness. As to the *first*, who sees not how the Life of Man is perverted, the force and tendency of Nature crook't and bow'd to designs utterly unsuitable to the Capacities and Faculties of a Rational Mind, and to the great End of our Creation ? who can look into the Life of Man, and not easily conclude that his chief Aim is Wealth and Greatness, not Happiness ? or which is something sillier, that his design is some unnecessary Accomplishment, not Vertue and Goodness, or a vain Esteem and popular Applause, not the Peace and Wisdom of his Mind ? who sees not how greedily Men pursue those sensual Satisfactions, which naturally tend to enslave the Soul, and to extinguish the rational Pleasure and Vigour of our Minds ? In a word, Wealth, and Honour, and Power, and Pleasure are the Idols of Mankind ;

1. In false ends.

these are the things for which they live, for which they love and value life; these are the glorious Possessions which enflame our Emulations and our Industry; these are the things which the Unfortunate man Envies, and the Fortunate Honours; these are the things which distinguish and discriminate Mankind into their several Ranks and Degrees, the Contempt or Esteem of the World, the Respects and Affronts, the Love and Hate of Mankind being ever proportion'd to the Degrees of Wealth and Power which they fancy others possessed of. To these noble Ends the sage and experienc'd Parent trains up his young ones, instilling daily into 'em all the subtle Maxims of Covetousness and Ambition, and judging of their Proficiency and Hopefulness by the Progress they make towards these Ends, *that is*, the more enslav'd they are, the more Hopeful, the more promising is their Youth.

2. Coldness
in pursuit
of our true
end.

Nor are Men more Zealous in pursuing the false, than cold and insincere in pursuing the true Ends of Life, Vertue and Happiness. This is too too Evident to any one who shall consider
how

how fond we are of our Diseases and our Errors, how Impatient of that Instruction or Reproof which tends to cure, undeceive and disabuse us, how sluggish we are in the study of Important Truths, how listless and remiss in the use of those means which conduce to Vertue, to the freeing our Minds, and to the Confirming our Resolutions: and therefore lastly how light, wavering and unconstant we are in the Practice of those things which Right Reason convinces us to be our Duty.

CHAP. II.

*The particular and immediate Cause
of Ill Success.*

Three more particular & immediate Causes of ill Success Assigned. 1. The Frame and Contexture of Humane Nature, 2. Vicious Education. 3. Vicious Conversation, the natural Effects of which are, 1. Inconsiderateness, 2. False Notions, 3. Ungovernableness and Impotency of Will. 4. Insincerity, 5. Levity & Inconstancy: The whole Exemplified.

ALL this that I have said in the former Chapter is plain and evident,

dent, we see and feel it and bemoan it, but yet we live on in the same manner still; whence therefore is this Infatuation of our Understanding that enslaves us to false and irrational Ends? whence is that Impotence of Mind? whence is that Insincerity that deludes our Desires, and produces nothing but feeble and unsuccessful Endeavours? neither is this a difficult Matter to discover; that we live and act irrationally proceeds evidently from *three Causes*. *First*, The Contexture and Frame of our Nature. *Secondly*, A Vicious Education. *Thirdly*, Vicious Conversation.

The Contexture of Nature the first Cause of an Irrational Life.

The *first* spring or source of Irrational Desires and Actions is the Contrivance and Composition of our Nature; our sensual and brutish Appetites have their Foundation in our Natural Constitution as well as our rational Affections; for we are made up of Body as well as Soul; Hence is it that there is in Man a doubtful fluctuation and indetermination to different Objects, the Reason of the Mind, and the Appetite of the Body distracting and dividing him by their different Proposals. The Impressions of sense and Representations
of

of Reason successively awakening in him very different and generally very contrary Desires ; whereas Angels by the Perfection , and Beasts by the Imperfection of their Nature are determin'd and confin'd to their Proper and Necessary Objects ; Man is left to a strange uncertainty, undetermined by the Reason of the Mind , or the Instinct or Appetite of the Body, moved indeed successively by each, perfectly governed and over-ruled by neither. But it were well for Man that the Inclinations of these two different Principles were so justly pois'd , that he were naturally left in a true Liberty and pure Indifference equally able to follow the Dictates of Reason, and the Appetites of Flesh and Blood : But alas ! how Impetuous are the Lusts of the Body ! how Irresistible are those Passions which the Objects of Sense aided by a Carnal Imagination raise in us ! On the other side , how Cold are the Representations of Reason , when we most need it's Assistance and Authority ! how faint and feeble the Natural Inclination of the Soul to what is truly good and great ! how remote and distant the Rewards of Vertue, and consequently how
weak

weak and cold their Influence, and how faint and imperfect is the Pleasure that attends it abstracted from future Rewards in all other Minds besides those who are arrived in some sort at Perfection! 'tis true, at some Seasons, and upon some Occasions the Remonstrances of Conscience are so sharp, its Reproaches so bitter, the Disdain and Confusion of the Mind so unsufferable that they render that which is a Pleasure to the Sense, a Torment to the Soul, and its agreeableness to our Imagination cannot make amends for its harshness and Contradiction to our Reason. But alas! these are but short-lived Fits which soon pass over; for Business diverts, Pleasure enchants, and repeated Violence offer'd to our Reason stupifies and deadens the Natural Conscience, and what is worse than all this, a silly and vitious Education does generally so corrupt our Judgments, and prepossess us with vain and foolish Affections, that the Checks of Conscience are extremely seldom and extremely faint, unless the Commission of some gross Sin do awaken it by a deep and Deadly Wound. This is,

*Education
a second
Cause of
Man's Mi-
sery.*

2. A second Cause of that general
Apo-

Apostasie and Defection from Reason so notorious in the World, *A silly and vicious Education*. How well does it fare with Children when they derive only their Original Corruption from their Parents? Ah! how often are their weak Dispositions to Vice nurs'd and cherish'd by their Parents into an Absolute, uncontrollable and settled Tyranny. Nay, what is worse yet, how often are the seeds of Vertue, those towardly Dispositions which many bring into the World with 'em choaked and stifled, not only by the Neglect, not only by the Indulgence, but even by the Example and Authority of Parents?

————— *Velocius & Citius nos* Juven.
Sat. 14
Corrumpunt Vitiorum Exempla Domestica,
magnis

Cum subeant animos Autoribus ———
Ab, with what speed must the Infection
spread,
When Youth by Parents Crimes are war-
ranted,
And Tempted on to Sin! ———

When Corrupt Inclination is ripen'd into a second Nature, when our innate weaknesses and Follies are confirm'd by those false Principles, and that vicious Confidence which we derive from Edu-
cati-

cation, then we are sent into the World, left to our own disposal, abandon'd to our own Government; Poor Creatures! not only expos'd unarm'd, unguarded, to Temptations, but like *Sampson* to the *Philistines* tied and bound too: Ah! could we so easily burst our Bonds as he did his! but whence should we recover our lost Liberty?

*Conversati-
on a Third.*

Conversation, instead of being an Assistance to us in our Endeavours after Happiness, doth generally tend to promote our Misery; Philosophy is not now the business of Conversation, nor is Friendship any way useful or serviceable to the great end of Life: the Ligament of Society is Riot and Revelling, or sordid Profit and Interest, or peradventure folly, trifling, and impertinence: these are the ties and bonds of our Confederacies; so that whatever Authority our Friends and Acquaintance have over us, whatever influence they have upon us, is imployed to no other purpose but to recommend and endear Vice to us, to render it, if not beautiful and lovely to us, at leastwise less deformed and ugly than it is: Hence it is that retirement is so generally recommended to those who design to make any progress
in

in true Wisdom, and that such as are truly vertuous do so passionately Complain of the Disadvantages they suffer by Conversing with the World : for the truth is, Wisdom and Goodness are such unfashionable Theams of Discourse, such unusual, nay, I may add, unwelcom Subjects of Entertainment, that the Company deserves now to be prais'd, which is only barren and unprofitable, not hurtful, and wherein we suffer no greater loss than that of our time.

It is now easie to imagine what fruit a Corrupt Nature must bring forth, when not only left destitute of Necessary Cultivation, but depraved yet more by a vitious Education, and vitious Conversation; what can all these together bring forth, but a loathsom brood of Diseases and Vices such as these, Rashness, Precipitancy, Heedlessness, and Unthoughtfulness, False Notions, Ungovernableness and Impotence of *Will*, Insincerity, Levity and Inconstancy, which are the Plagues of Humane Life, and the fatal Obstacles of our Tranquillity : for either they obstruct our true Happiness by preventing our search after it; or delude our search by Corrupting and Perverting our Understanding; or else they

*The Effects
of these
three.*

frustrate

Inconsideration.

frustrate and defeat the Influence of its Discovery by Obstinate Reluctances in the Body; and an Unhappy Impotence in the Mind: All this is manifest upon the most transient glance we can take, of these particulars. To begin with *Want of Consideration*: This is a Necessary Effect of that Corruption and Depravation which I have ascribed to Nature, Education, and Conversation; The Body unaccustomed to obey is Impatient of Deliberation when its Pleasure is in view, and a taking Imagination over-rules whatever weak Plea Reason makes; Nay, what is worse, the very disuse of Reason in Men abandon'd to the Conduct of Custom, and sway'd by the Enticement of Inclination, and Authority of Example, bereaves 'em almost of the Faculty it self: So that their Life and Actions are not the Effects of Judgment and Deliberation; but injudicious, unweigh'd Custom; or more rash, heedless and precipitant Passion. And can any Man think, that when the meanest Art or Profession is not learned without Right Instruction or Just Diligence, Wisdom the great Art of Living Happily should be attained without as much as just Consideration? when a Man cannot

not grow Rich or Prosperous without Contrivance and Industry, is it probable he should grow Happy by Inadvertency and Chance? it is impossible.

For Innumerable will be the false and pernicious Notions which such a one corrupted and depraved, rash and unadvis'd must be betray'd into and confirm'd in, there is no Principle so false, no Practice so absurd which such do not readily entertain: Hence 'tis that Men do so generally live by Rote, that Men's Principles are the fashionable ones of the Neighbourhood or Nation, that their manner of Life takes that shape which their Rank and Quality, and the Chance of their Conversation gives it: and their very Religion it self is the Native Commodity of the Soil they are planted in; Hence 'tis finally that Men are Unrighteous and Wicked, careless and unconcerned, notwithstanding all the Calls or Invitations, all the Rewards and Menaces of the Gospel, Convictions of Conscience, Impulses of Grace, Mercies, Threats and Judgments of God: and Covetousness, Luxury, Uncleaness, Prophaneness, Ambition are as constantly practis'd in Court and City as condemned in the Pulpit and Prefs; nor is it to be expected otherwise,

for false Notions give Countenance and Authority to our Follies, and fortifie us in all our wretched Miscarriages against the Assaults of Law and Reason, of Conscience and God himself: No Condition is so desperately forlorn as that of Sin and Folly, back'd and authorized by Inveterate Principles! These render our very Industry not only useless and unserviceable, but even fatal and destructive to our Happiness: these defeat the very tendency of our Nature towards Happiness, and turning it into a wrong Channel, make it run with Violence toward our Misery:

*Ungovernableness
and Impotence of
Will.*

These help to render our Passions both numerous and ungovernable by representing some things as Evils which are not, and by augmenting real Evils beyond their Natural proportion: and herein consist the very Essence and *being* of humane Misery, or at least a part of it, when our own folly encreases both the Number and Weight of Evils, and our numberless Passions do exceed all just and natural bounds: and this is a Constant Truth, the less Understanding there is in any Man, the more violent is his Passion, the Passion of a Fool being like the Zeal of a Bigot, the more blind, the more furious. All this makes

makes good the Observation of the Poet,

*Non qui Sidonio contendere callidus Ostro,
Nescit Aquinatam potentia vellera fucum,
Certius accipiet Damnum, propiusque Me-
dullis,*

Hor. l. 1.
Ep. 10.

*Quam qui non poterit vero distinguere fal-
sum.*

*Not the Deluded Trader who doth buy
Counterfeit Aquin for the Tyrian dye,
His folly shall more surely or dearly rue,
Than he who does, false Nations take for true.*

Insincerity is another fruit of the Cor-
ruption of our Nature, and the Depra-
vation of Education and Conversation.
This is that which makes us Lazy in
our search after Truth, and Partial in the
Examination of our Opinions and Acti-
ons; for when the bent of our Nature
runs towards Carnal Pleasures, and this
is Confirm'd by Education and false No-
tices of things, we shall be apt to take
up and carels our selves with present,
easie and ready Entertainments. We
shall not extend our Care or Prospect
very far, but be Content to enjoy the
sweet in every present Circumstance
and Event, without Regard to their fu-
ture tendency, which was the Happiness
(if my memory deceive me not) of the

Insincerity.

Cyrenaics : the same distemper prevailing, we shall be apt to think every thing healthful that is pleasant, and easily admit those Principles most true, which are most grateful to our Appetites. 'Tis not therefore to be wondred at, if the same Humour which makes us greedy of Embracing, make us obstinate in defending pleasing Errours. For the same fondness and partiality renders us incapable of Instruction, and Impatient of Advice, tho designed by the most faithful Affection, and managed with the most Prudent Tenderness.

Hor. l. i.
Ep. 8.

*Fidis offendar Medicis, Irascar amicis,
Cur me funesto properant arcere veterno?
Quæ nocuere sequar, fugiam quæ profore
credam.*

*The Plainness of Physicians and of Friends,
Tho by Affection mov'd and Truth, offends;
Can't I enjoy my fatal Rest for you?
Let me alone my Ruine to pursue,
And fly my Happiness. —*

It is easie now to judge what must be the state of that Man who is insincere and false to himself in all his Deliberations, and Obstinate in the Defence of his Errours, who is partial in all his own Reflections, and Impatient of the faithful

Re-

Reflections of others: how is it probable that that Man should attain to any Rational Happiness who is incapable of using his own Reason aright; or enjoying the benefit of another's.

But 'tis not the only Mischief we suffer by these Diseases of the Mind that they render us incapable of Discovering true Happiness, they do also disable us to pursue it when discovered with that earnestness and vigour which the Importance of the thing requires; for they must needs beget in us a slothful Remissness in our Endeavours, and an unhappy Levity and Inconstancy in all our Designs and Purposes: 'tis very improbable that we should be steady and immoveable in those purposes which are not founded upon clear and solid Reason, or zealous in such as are encountred with violent

Opposition from our selves: * Hence 'tis that the Scenes of Man's Life are so various, so frequently changed, that every Man does so often shift his Person, and appear

a very different Actor on the Stage. Thus we meet with *Epicurean* and *Sto-*

*Levety and
Inconstancy.*

* *Quidam alternis Vatinius, alternis Catones; & modo parum illis Severus est Curius, parum pauper Fabricius, parum frugi & contentus vili Tubero. Modo Licinius Divitiis, Apicius Cœnis, Mecenatem deliciis provocant. Maximum Judicium est mala mentis Fluctuatio, & inter simulationem Virtutum, amoremque Vitiorum, assidua jactatio, Sen. Epist.*

CXX.

ick, Clergy-man and Merchant, Devoto and Statesman, Enthusiast and Parasite, all acted in their turn by the self-same Man; who is tossed to and fro by the sudden Sallies or Gusts of various Desires and Passions. Nor is it any Man's Wit or Sagacity that turns him into all these different shapes, but his Vice and Folly, for Being ignorant of the true good, the true Happiness of Man, he catches at fleeting Shadows, and Courts thin airy Dreams, and uncertain Apparitions; and therefore daily sets up new Projects; and those too, repugnant to the Old: And thus, Man wearieth out himself by vain and unsuccessful, because unconstant vanishing Attempts. This were tolerable, did it befall us only in Temporal things, whose Emptiness makes our success it self frustration and disappointment; but alas we suffer the same thing in the weighty Concerns of Vertue and Happiness, our Religious purposes do generally die strangled in the Birth, and all our glorious Designs dash and break themselves to pieces against the next Difficulty or Temptation; and yet relapsed into a state of Folly, and Sin, and Danger, we would again return to that narrow Path whose steep and rough ascent

scant discouraged us ; wandering in Night, and Fogg and Storm, fain would we reach the Happy Region where calm light and chearful day does ever dwell : plainly and without a Metaphor, when we resolve to be good and vertuous, we are kept from it by the seeming Ease and Pleasure of Sin, and the hardships necessary to be undergone in the attainment of Vertue ; and yet the Remorse, and Danger, and Dissatisfaction which do always accompany a Negligent and Sinful Life, make us wish for the Peace and Comfort, the Security and Rewards of Vertue. But Oh ! how seldom do we proceed further than wishes or some Attempts more lazy and dis-spirited than our Wishes ! The Reason's plain, Vertue is more Rational, Vice is more grateful ; The Understanding is convinc'd, but the Will is enslaved ; *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.* A Sinner cannot purchase the Pleasures of the Mind, but by some uneasie Penances, and Severities of the Body, nor enjoy the Pleasures of the Body without the Checks and Reproaches of the Mind : and this makes him unsteady and irresolute in all his purposes. Would you see an Instance of the whole Matter ? you

The Whole exemplif'd.

feel it better than I can describe it, and yet 'tis not difficult to make a tolerable Representation of that which I have in my self often proved and often bewailed: Nor can I see, why I should blush to own those frailties which are so incident to Humane Nature, that the greatest Glory and Happiness of mortal Man is not to have been never subject to 'em, but to have conquer'd 'em.

One while moved by the gaze and wonder, the respect and reverence, with which the World treats greatness, and by those Opportunities of Pleasure which I saw Wealth and Power put into Men's hands: I resolved to rouse all the Strength, to imploy all the Force and Power of Mind and Body for the Attainment of Wealth and Greatness. I flatter'd my self, I knew how to merit, nor did I think my self incapable of Practising all the subtil humble Arts of Candidates and Dependents, could I once prevail with my self to stoop to 'em: but when the toil and difficulty and meanness too of this attempt had given me a little disgust; and the Pleasures of Friendship and Fortune, (by neither of which have I ever been utterly deserted) incountred my Natural Inclinations to ease,

ease, and softness, I soon exchanged my former Notion of Happiness for a more calm and quiet one ; I began to think it wise to live to day, and to prefer my present Blessings in Possession before the uncertain future ones of Opinion and Expectation. I wished for an Opportunity to retire from every thing that might awaken my Ambition, or interrupt my quiet, and thought that in a lazy shade, and obscure retreat, I might with most freedom and truest Contentment enjoy my self, a cheap pleasure, and an humble Friend, and laugh at the Ambitious restless part of Mankind.

Sometimes springing a thought of light, and lost in the Pleasure of a Speculation, I have resolved to devote my self intirely to a Studious Life, I ador'd the Memory of those great Souls whose Works have given them an Immortality here below ; I looked upon the Learned (as *Epicurus* words it) as Gods amongst Men, I did not question but Contemplation which once seemed to me to be the Business of Angels, must needs be the Joy and Delight of Man, but alas ! that I must say it, all that Learning which is purchased with toil and difficulty is but a vain, uncertain Amusement
of

of the Mind, it has much of Pomp and Ostentation in it, but is of very little use; I would it were not true, that those parts of Learning which are of most Use have least of Certainty and Demonstration, and those which can justly pretend to most Certainty make Men the worst Return of their Studies, and are of least use. I have observed accordingly that the most Learned are not always the most serviceable to the World, not only for this Reason, but also Thoughtfulness and Retirement rendring Men very commonly as unfit for as averse to Business, bereaving them of that Sufficiency and Skill, that Address and presence of Mind, which is not to be gained but by Conversation and Experience: and it was easie for me to remark that the active and busie Man was not only more Skilful, but more Eloquent too than the Contemplative, as having a much clearer insight into the Humours and Passions of Men, and the secret Springs and Interests by which they are moved, and being able to manage 'em with a more popular Dexterity and more cleanly, gentle Insinuation. And now I began to esteem of Learning as a pretty Ornament of Life, but not fit to be the support of
it,

it, I thought it might serve to fill the void and empty spaces, but not to be the Business and Imployment of it.

I have been sometimes ravished with the Beauty of a Noble Action, and resolved to lead a Life severe and Vertuous, spent, not in private Ease, and lazy Diversions, but in the Honour and Pleasure of doing good. But good God! how weak is Nature! how slight are such Impressions! how numerous the Temptations; how prevalent the Inclinations which carry us another way.

This has been a long time my state, tossed on uncertain Seas, and hoysing Sail to every Wind that blew, and I find that neither greatness of Mind nor Fortune doth raise Men above this Inconstancy. For I meet with my own Reflections, my own Passions in the Excellent * *Seneca*; only the Character of himself he there presents us with, is expressed with more life and briskness, and exalted as much above this of mine, as was the Nature and Station of that great Man above mine. I cannot say that I have yet made my Port, but I have discover'd it, and I sail tho slowly, yet in a direct Line, having my Happiness, my *Haven*, all along in ken.

* *De Tran-*
quillitate
animi.

CHAP. III.

The Cure of the former Maladies.

Conformity to Reason the general Cure. This Conformity must appear in two Things. 1. In the proposal, or right and true Ends. 2. In the pursuit of them with Zeal and Constancy. Infer'd from all how we are to treat the Body. What our Education. What our Conversation ought to be.

*The Nature
or Univer-
sal and Im-
mediate
Cause of
Happiness
Infer'd.*

FROM this Account of the Rise and Progress of Man's Misery, 'tis easie to infer what it is, wherein the Happiness of this present life consists, or at least what the Universal and Immediate Cause of it is, namely a Conformity of our Minds and Lives to true Reason and sound Philosophy; this is a state of Light and Knowledge, of Peace and Security, of lasting and rational Delight. This invests the Understanding in its just Sovereignty and Dominion, and restores the *Will* to it's true Liberty, this makes our prospect of the future, taking and inviting, and our Reflection on the time past, easie and comfortable. This layes a solid foundation for our Reliance on the Merits and Intercession of our Mediator, and

and raises our Hope as High as Heaven; this prevents our Misfortunes and Calamities, or, what is more Happy, enables us to Conquer 'em: In a word, this makes us great in Life, but much more great and venerable in Death, Righteousness and Goodness revealing its Beauty and Glory most then, when all things else do shrink and fade.

We see the Happiness that springs from our Conformity and Subjection to Reason, and 'tis easie from those two things wherein especially I have declar'd the Sinners Deviation from Reason to consist, to infer, what we must do, if we will live Rationally. First, *We must propose to our selves a Wise and Rational End of Life.* Secondly, *We must pursue this End with Life, and Spirit, and Constancy.* These I laid down as the first and most Comprehensive Rules for the Attainment of Happiness: I will therefore say something of each, but briefly and in general terms as the Nature of this Treatise requires.

Two general Rules for attaining Happiness infer'd

1.

2.

First, We must propose to our selves a Rational and Wise End of Life; that is, the true Happiness of a Rational Creature: When we have done this, when our Understandings are fully convinc'd,

vinc'd and perswaded of the Excellence and Necessary of it, and when we have possessed our Minds with a sacred Reverence, a firm and devout Love for it: This, like the Eastern Star the *Magi*, will lead us through all the windings and turnings of Life to *Bethlehem* and Happiness; this will soon disengage us from that *Labyrinth* of Contradictious Desires and wild Opinions, in which the Fool and Sinner is endlessly entangled. When we have done this, we shall find every place a School, every one we converse with a Tutor, and every passage of our Life, or another's full of instruction: Nor a look whether Cheerful or Melancholy; not a word whether wise or foolish; not a Sigh that an oppressed Heart vents, not a Joy that smiles in the face but will teach us Philosophy; shew us the Use and Beauty of Divine Truth and Divine Vertue; for in the Vicious, we shall see what false and fading Pleasures, what idle Fears, what vain sorrows, false Principles, and the Tyranny of Sin fills their Minds with; in the Good we shall see what true Peace, Vertue creates in the Mind, what Constancy and Majesty in the Life, what Courage and Hopes it inspires in Affliction, what Mag-

Magnanimity and Humility in Prosperity; and in a word what Light, what Serenity it diffuses through the whole Man: we shall see in many Instances every Day, what the Mischief of irrational Desires and ungovernable Passions are; and on the contrary, how great the Advantages, how charming the Beauty of Truth and Vertue, of Wisdom and the Due Government and Regulation of all our Passions; Nor is the Instruction and Illumination of our Understanding promoted by every Accident which falls under our Observation, and by all sorts of People, with whom we converse: the only Advantage which we shall reap from the prefixing our selves a rational End of Life, and the possessing our Souls with the Love of it; for when we have done this, we shall be actually freed from the greater part at least of the Troubles and Calamities of Life; we shall be raised above all senseless silly Desires, and consequently above all senseless, silly Vexations and Grievs, and unmanly Complaints: for when we have set our Hearts upon true and rational Happiness, how unnecessary, nay how despicable will most of those things appear which we now admire and covet: we shall not
then

then think it reasonable to sigh and toil for this House or that Land, for this Preferment or that Trade, this Honour or that Beauty, for these are no Essential, no Necessary Ingredients of a Rational Happiness. Nor is this all, thy Joys and Pleasures will grow and increase upon thee; for by approaching every day nearer and nearer to thy great End, thou wilt be wonderfully surprized with fresh Delight, whilst thou do'st behold the fruit of thy Travel, the Advantage of thy Philosophy, and the daily increase of thy Wealth: thou wilt see thy self like a thriving Plant grow up daily more strong and beautiful: the toil of others sorts to no Happy End; The Covetous Man grows not Richer by Heaping up, nor the Ambitious Man greater by rising higher, or at least neither grows Happier by being either Richer or Greater; but thou wilt every day grow wiser by study, more Vertuous by Practice, Calmer and Happier by both. O to what a height and perfection will thy Pleasure rise, when thy store shall grow big enough to Feast and Entertain not thy self only, but all Men else; when the Thirsty shall come and drink at thy Streams, and the Scorched shall refresh them-

themselves under thy shade ; when thou led by the same Spirit with our great Lord and Master shalt open the Eyes of the Blind, and the Ears of the Deaf, shalt cast out Devils, and strengthen the Feet of the Lame ; I mean, when thou shalt teach the foolish Wisdom, when thou shalt persuade and charm the Obstinate, when thou shalt deliver the Unclean and the Passionate from the Evil Spirits, the Vices that possessed them, and when thou shalt teach the Enslaved and Impotent Sinner, how to overcome the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, thou wilt then indeed, as thou art the Image, so do the Works of God, thou wilt be a Heavenly and Tutelar tho mortal Angel amongst Men ; and wherever thou dost, there *Wisdom, Vertue, and Happiness* will dwell too. But to attain to this state, 'tis not only Necessary to prefix our selves a Rational End of Life ; But also

Secondly, We must pursue this End with Life, and Spirit, and Constancy. It is not a good Fit or a Devout Passion that will make us either Vertuous or Happy, there must go more than this to conquer an ill habit, or implant a good one ; 'tis not one brisk Sally, or

Y

one

one warm Charge that will subdue the World and Flesh, and put us into an entire Possession of Victory and Security; No, when Warmth and Passion have made a prosperous Impression on the Enemy, a sober Patience must make good the ground we have gained, a steady and resolved Courage must urge and press the Advantage to an Issue; without Vigour, Patience and Constancy to carry us still forwards, the warmth and Passion with which we begin the Course of Virtue, will stand us in little stead; Ah! how many have marched out of *Egypt*, and perished in the Wilderness! how many have wrecked within sight of Shore? How many have lost their Reward of Repentance by their Relapse and Revolt? how many have fallen by Negligence, Security, and Sloth, into that wretched state, out of which they had once delivered themselves by Courage, Resolution and Self-denial? Nor is the *Necessity* of Vigour, Patience, and Constancy, in our pursuit of Happiness, the only Motive to it; the *Certainty of Success* and the *Greatness* and *Eminence* of the Advantages, which attend it, are sufficient to animate and encourage any Man that seriously Considers it: the Labour and
Hope

Hope of the Husbandman is lost, unless the fruitful Earth, and fruitful Seed be blest'd with fruitful Seasons too; The Trade of the Merchant is properly but Adventuring, and his increase depends as much on Winds, and Waves, and other as uncertain Chances, as on his own Skill and Diligence: Fortune must assist the Courage and the Conduct of the Soldier, or else Poverty and Dishonour will be the only purchase of his Blood and hazard; But it fares not thus with Man in his pursuit of true Happiness, the Traffick of the Philosopher depends not upon Winds nor Tide, the Seeds of Vertue, if the Ground be well Cultivated, will thrive in any Weather, and sometimes better in Storms than Sunshine, and finally the success of our Conflicts against Sin and Misery depends not on our Fortune, but our Courage and our Industry. How unspeakable a Pleasure is it now to think that we cannot be disappointed in our Travails, nor defeated of our Hopes, while we labour for Vertue and Happiness, if our Endeavours be sincere and persevering, our success is certain and unquestionable: but what an accession doth this Pleasure receive when we consider, what will be

the glorious fruit of this Success, Tranquillity, Chearfulness, Greatness and Enlargement of Soul, Indolence, Pleasure, Life, Immortality, Security, and in one word Happiness. O Glorious reward of our Conflict and our Victories! what neither Wealth nor Greatness, nor Honour nor Crowns; what neither Blood nor Toil, nor Cunning nor Fortune can give! that Rational and sincere Endeavours after Wisdom and Vertue will give the meanest Man upon Earth, that is, *Happiness*! O Blessed Issue of Philosophical, that is, truly Christian Travel! the Rich, the Great, the Honourable, the Mighty may Complain even of their success, and repent them of the Purchase they have made at too dear a Rate; but the Philosopher, the Christian can never repent of the success of his Study, his Self-denial, his Patience, his Prayers: for how is it possible to complain of being Happy, or repent of being Wise and Vertuous? there is nothing Empty, nothing Evil, nothing Mean, nothing Uncertain in true Wisdom, in Rational Happiness.

This brief and general Account of Happiness, and of the way to it, does naturally instruct us how we are to treat
the

the *Body*, and what it is that a *Rational Education*, and *wise Conversation* ought to design and aim at, if our Conformity to Reason be either the Happiness of this present Life, or the Immediate Cause of it, (for I will not trouble my self with nice and subtil Distinctions in Moral Discourses) then 'tis plain that we are obliged to such a kind of Discipline and Government of our selves as may render the Body most Obsequious to the Mind, and may exalt and establish the Power and Dominion of Reason: for whatever tends to obscure our Understanding, to enfeeble the Will, to cherish our sensual Inclinations, and augment their force and violence, doth so far Necessarily tend to deprave the Nature of Man, and to subvert and o'rethrow his Happiness; and from hence it appears that the Excellence of Education consists in possessing the Minds of Youth with wise Principles, with true Notions of Good and Evil, and informing and moulding their Minds into an Esteem and veneration for Wisdom and Vertue. The first Vertue I conceive a Child capable of is Obedience, and this is indeed the Foundation of all Vertue: to this let him be inur'd and trained up betimes, he that

finds it easie to obey another's Reason, will not find it difficult to obey his own; for when the judgment comes to be form'd and ripen'd, when it comes to exercise its Authority, it will find a Body not us'd to give, but receive Commands; from this vertue of Obedience he is to be led gently on to a Rational and voluntary Choice of what is good, he must be taught gradually not only his plain Duty, but the Motives to it; for it is as necessary to his Happiness that he should love, as that he should know his Duty, But this we strive in vain to instill by Art and Instruction, if we do not instill it by the Influence and Authority of wise and excellent Examples too.

As to Conversation 'tis plain, that it ought to be the Practice of those Vertues which a Pious Education instill'd, and that we ought to have no less Reverence for our Reason, when we are at our own Disposal, and under our own Government, than we had for the Authority of our Parents when we were under their's: what ought to be the tie and Ligaments of Friendship, what the Rules of Conversation, and what the great Ends of Society, is abundantly mani-

manifest from the Nature of that Happiness which it behoves us to propose as the great End of Life ; what is the great End of Man ought to be the Design of Society ; and therefore 'tis plain that Wisdom and Vertue ought to be the foundation and bond of those Friendships which we enter into, voluntary and of Choice, That Conversation should be so regulated that we may grow by it more Wise and Vertuous , or at least that our Discourse, if it be not profitable should be innocent, and that we should do and say nothing in Company which we should have Reason to blush at or Repent of in private.

I have now finished this Discourse which I designed only as an Introduction to, or Preparative for those which are to follow : I do not think, that 'tis now Necessary for me in a Pathetick Conclusion, to perswade Men to endeavour to be *Happy* : the Desires of Happiness are inseparable from all Beings, at least-wise 'tis impossible to be Rational and not desire to be Happy : if I have therefore sufficiently proved that 'tis possible to be Happy ; and if I have shew'd that a diligent Enquiry, a vigorous and persevering Industry is Necessary

cessary to the Attainment of it ; if I have pointed out the general Causes of Humane Misery, and together with them their general Cure and Remedy, I have done enough to enkindle those Desires and beget those Resolutions in my Reader, which if they do not make him actually Happy, will at least dispose and prepare him for a further Enquiry after Happiness, which was the utmost design of these Papers; I have therefore nothing more to put him in mind of now, but this, That as I do all along suppose the Grace of God Necessary to second and inforce our Reason, so I would ever be understood to urge and press the Necessity of our Prayers as much as that of our Endeavours, the Fervency of the one, as much as the Sincerity of the other.

F I N I S.

